

# Meeting the Challenge by Innovative Thinking and Action for Youth in Search of Work and Dignity

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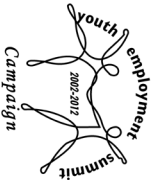
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## Alexandria Declaration

We the participants in the first Youth Employment Summit (YES 2002), meeting at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in Alexandria Egypt, hereby reaffirm our profound commitment to a decade-long global campaign for the creation of hundreds of millions of additional opportunities for sustainable livelihoods for youth all over the world. A paradigm shift on Employment is needed. Quality is as important as the quantity of jobs created. The poor, living on less than a dollar a day, cannot be locked into a life of deprivation. We must move from unskilled to skilled occupations, from low paying to high paying jobs, from subsidized public employment to sustainable productive livelihoods.

We recognize that these goals can only be met if all actors agree to address a number of important issues: peace, fair trade, market access, technology transfer, capital flows and poverty eradication. This will require redoubled efforts from the entire international community, and donors must meet their commitments and give special attention to projects and programs for youth employment. Convergence and greater synergies between different initiatives and programs dealing with youth employment will benefit youth.

While national governments have a special responsibility for according overriding priority to youth employment and for creating the necessary policy framework, we recognize that all segments of society must collaborate to empower youth to become the artisans of their own future.

*To that end, we engage ourselves to support vigorous action in each of the following areas:*

**Employability:** To ensure access for all youth to appropriate education and training followed by adequate support during the transition to work, regardless of their location or background. We cannot confront the challenges of tomorrow with yesterday's skills. Educational institutions must show unprecedented imagination and vision, using new tools for new times. They must impart marketable skills, promote self-esteem and shape a world view that embraces the new, opens up to the other, and rises to the challenge of the untried.

**Employment Creation:** To adopt those policies that will encourage job-led economic growth, reduce the bias towards capital, and foster the institutional structures that can provide the advantages of scale at both the production and marketing phases of micro-enterprises supported by micro-credit. The corporate sector has a major responsibility in supporting micro-enterprises and self-employed youth through mechanisms of franchising, outsourcing and buy-back arrangements.

**Equity:** To provide equal opportunities for all to realize their full potential. Education, health and nutrition are fundamental rights for all. Special attention must be given to the needs of the disabled, the rural, and the marginalized groups in society, and above all, to young women, whether in education or when entering the labor force for the first time, and who in many parts of the world still suffer from discriminatory barriers. No society has truly advanced by depriving itself of the talents and abilities of half of its population.

**Entrepreneurship:** To engender the special creativity of youthful entrepreneurs, who see social and economic opportunities where others only see problems. Entrepreneurs, whether they are working in the villages or in the capital markets, are the visionaries who generate livelihoods for themselves and for others. We need to encourage, nurture and support their quest for the new and the untried.

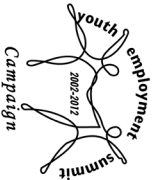
**Environmental Sustainability:** To seek sustainable employment opportunities based on attention to water, land, energy, the atmosphere, biodiversity and eco-system management. It would be shortsighted to destroy our environment in the quest for transient employment opportunities.

**Empowerment:** To harness the uncommon opportunities of the ICT revolution to include the excluded and reach the unreached in terms of knowledge and skill empowerment. The whole constellation of institutional arrangements from credit to resource-use, from marketing to connectivity and content, must be structured in a way that empower youth in their quest for sustainable livelihoods.

We recognize that solutions to problems must be home-grown and responsive to the particular socio-cultural and economic context. But we can all learn from the experiences of others, and derive strength from our common purpose. Thus national campaigns through the YES Country Networks must be embedded into a global campaign that will help share knowledge and experience. The Global Knowledge Resource of the campaign should help make the best practices of the few into the common practices of the many. The cost of inaction on the issues of youth employment is too dreadful to contemplate. We must act now to start the process of creating this better future. We shall act now and in the future. The goals are inspiring, but the tasks are enormous. To those who ask, can it be done? We say with youth organizations and networks spearheading this global campaign... **YES! It can be done. It must be done. It will be done!**

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## FOREWORD

The YES Campaign is one year old. The 6Es - Employment Creation, Employability, Equity, Entrepreneurship, Environmental Sustainability, and Empowerment of youth - form the pillars of the YES Campaign. We are grateful to the Secretary General's Youth Employment Network (YEN) for conceptualizing the first four Es. It is clear that we must work closely with young people to provide them with productive and sustainable livelihoods. There are a billion youth (14 - 24 years old), and another 1.5 billion youth (under the age of 14) on the planet- how do we create a world of possibilities for them?

The YES Campaign believes that every individual and community can make a difference and insists on inclusion and collaboration. The 6Es form the basis of how we work together to create a better world and future for youth. This is too big a task for any one individual or group - together we will succeed. There is an urgent need to critically examine the issues and discuss potential solutions. Thankfully most countries have signed the Millennium Development Goals and fulfilling those goals through a youth employment led strategy is our mission.

This paper shows how the 6Es are brought to life through programs and policies. It is part of a series of publications that describe the regional context of the 6Es, and their application to achieve the twin goals of the Campaign:

- 1) Build the capacity of young people to be leaders
- 2) Build an entrepreneurial culture to promote youth employment

This paper makes a strong argument for following participatory approaches to sustainable development and discusses different methodologies. Many case studies have been presented, underscoring that solutions to the problems of youth unemployment must be home-grown, and responsive to social, cultural and economic contexts.

This paper discusses in-depth, the fundamental and transformational issues that govern job-led growth. The emphasis is on the need to provide new directions. It is important to recognize that young people are the most active, and vital force in society. Innovative approaches for poverty alleviation and generating work must begin with the engagement of youth. In addition it is important to learn from what has worked elsewhere and build the capacity of youth and youth serving organizations to identify business opportunities, train and develop young people, work with financial institutions, and engage youth as community developers and nation builders. This is possible - our work with young leaders in over 60 countries has shown us that with a little bit of support - enabling policies, training and development, financial support and mentorship, among others - can lead to a sea change in what can be accomplished.

I am grateful to our mentor Dr. Ponna Wignaraja, Chairman SAPNA for taking the time to prepare this paper. We are always amazed at Dr. Wignaraja's ready support for the YES Campaign, and his timely advice has helped us in many different ways. He is a world leader in participatory development practices and an advocate of the 'Tri-sector' model of growth. The tri-sector model brings the poor and marginalized to the decision-making process, which has been the domain of the public and private sectors, ensuring that programs and policies that keep in mind their needs, and treating them as full partners, not as mere beneficiaries.

"The eradication of poverty requires a major political rather than a technocratic approach where social mobilization and empowerment of the poor and their efficiency play a critical role. This simple truth is not based on a prior theorizing but on lessons from the ground." Dr. Ponna Wignaraja

I also congratulate my colleague Dr. Puneetha Segar Palakurthi in this attempt at conceptualizing the 6Es. Let us then follow the path outlined by Dr. Wignaraja and work to bring alive the 6Es with the tri-sector approach.

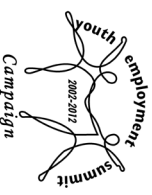
**Poonam Ahluwalia**  
**Executive Director**  
**YES Campaign**  
**December 2003**

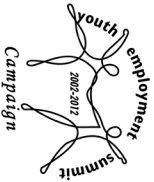
## The Reality and Challenge of Youth Employment

Youth alienation and unemployment in general and the double burden that poor youth face in particular, of being poor and searching for employment, creative work, self respect and dignity, are part of the major challenges we are facing globally in the new millennium. At the Alexandria YES Summit, figures for the numbers of youth searching for employment globally ranged from approximately 500 million to 1.5 billion. The State of World Population 2003 by UNFPA estimates that there are 1.2 billion adolescents entering into the productive work environment with meager investments and low skill bases. It is now clear even the lower estimate is too large, for the problem to be solved by expansion of conventional public and private sector growth, formal education and skill training programmes, welfare measures, micro credit and subsidies or charity. With almost half of the global population being under the age of 25, and facing the complex reality of their lives in terms of cultural, political and economic and sustainable development, youth need major investments in terms of both financial, technical and human resources to spur growth and development which can sustain such development.

For Asia, which has the largest concentration of youth (about 50% of the world youth lives in Asia and 50% of them are in poverty and vulnerable conditions) in search of sustainable livelihoods, the conventional strategies being adopted over decades have proven to be inadequate to solve the challenge of finding work, particularly with dignity. For rich youth in industrialized countries and youth from rich and elite families in Asia, there are still some opportunities and choices for gainful employment, despite periodic downturns in their economies, as in the current crises in both groups of countries. Formal educational systems still provide them training, at a cost, which can give them access to mainstream employment in the private or public sectors of the economy. It may be that formal education systems in both groups of countries also have to be re-oriented to changing employment needs in the private and public sectors of those countries. In addition the youth in rich countries have many state subsidized welfare programmes, safety nets in educational loans and grants, on the job training programmes to take care of their transitional needs. In poor countries such safety nets are not available or are becoming unsustainable. In few South Asian Countries, like *Kerala (India), Sri Lanka and Maldives*, free education up to University level was provided by the State and they achieved a high Human Development Index, but these programmes are not sustainable for lack of finance and also because of the fact that the formal education is not always leading to employment as is evident from the huge figures of educated unemployed youth in this region.

The UN Human Development Report suggested several adjustments, educational reforms and increased investment in Human Development Programmes and international financing institutions to Asian countries, but these programmes do not always reach poorer youth. In war torn areas and internal conflict situations it is often agreed that disarmament and conflict resolution can generate a “peace dividend” in the form of social development and productive employment generating investment. But with conflicts between and within countries multiplying, arms expenditures increasing and poor governance, the peace dividend does not always materialize.





It is not meant to imply in a simplistic way, that youth from rich and elite classes of society in Asia have no problems or that many of them are not alienated from their societies and are dropping out of the mainstream. Some of these alienated youth may hold a different set of values. They may have alternative worldviews and hopes for their future. They may not be able to take the stress involved in highly competitive societies. They may not be comfortable with the social injustices being created by mainstream development or join in this predatory process of unsustainable consumption of natural resource. These groups of dissenting rich youth are also questioning current mainstream development thinking and actions. But as mentioned at least they still have some opportunities, welfare cushions and safety nets. This option is not available to large numbers of poor youth. Poor youth are also dissenting from mainstream development thinking and action for different reasons. In their case, in addition to the above problems caused by mainstream development strategies, they have a second burden of poverty, which gives them fewer choices. Poor young women have a triple burden, by being women. Merely to say in vague general terms that poor youth in Asia must be given more choices, more opportunities for formal education, skills training, micro credit, primary health care and funding for these should be increased, is not a sufficient response. Migration from Asian countries to industrial countries and the Middle East while it may temporarily generate some employment and income without dignity has generated other kinds of social problems in their communities.

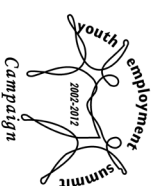
When 230 million youth around the world are facing acute poverty because of lack of livelihoods then it is necessary to understand in depth the nature of the crisis, the reality and identify innovative options to address the problem. There is no other opportune time for the Youth Employment Summit Campaign to outline the YES Framework for Action which gives a sense of direction and action to the achievement of the UN MDGs by promoting youth engagement in recreating their livelihood opportunities. The 6Es of the YES framework for Action: Employment Creation, Employability, Equity, Entrepreneurship, Environmental Sustainability and the Empowerment mark the six pillars of the comprehensive development strategy for youth which is based on spirit of collaboration and partnerships between the various stakeholders with youth at the vanguard of the entire process.

This paper is an attempt to understand how to realize the dream of YES Alexandria declaration by engaging the youth as a part of the solution rather than treating them as a problem to solve.

### **UN Millennium Development Goals**

- ❖ Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- ❖ Achieve universal primary education
- ❖ Promote gender equality and empower women
- ❖ Reduce child mortality
- ❖ Improve maternal health
- ❖ Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- ❖ Ensure environmental sustainability
- ❖ Develop a global partnership for development

## Employment Creation



The U.N. Social Summit in Copenhagen six years ago, and the recent U.N. Millennium Summit Declaration of 2001 called for reduction of poverty by 50% by 2015. The MDG # 8 and Target 16 specifically says, “In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth.” These and many other reports and studies are a recognition of the challenge of poverty and the right to **Decent Work**, the double and triple burden faced by poor youth, the vicious nexus between poverty and unemployment, the vicious cycle of poverty reproduction through unsustainable resource use-natural and financial - and the inability to move to good governance without eradicating the worst forms of poverty and providing work for poor youth, in a given time frame. In many of these Reports the Right to Work is recognized as a basic human right.

There is also recognition that a different pattern of growth and work is required. There is now a world historical framework in which the conventional ideological driving forces for accumulation, pertaining to the economically advanced societies (neo liberal or Marxist) no longer offers a viable road to the kind of accumulation required to meet the challenge of the need for a new pattern of growth and work. For sometime the compulsion for seeking alternative driving forces for accumulation, even in narrower conception, has been mounting.

In Asia, historically various experiences of development have helped their societies to transform to meet these challenges. Japan, since the Meiji Revolution in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, while embracing industrialization and liberalization followed a pattern of capitalism under non-classical conditions, i.e. while preparing for an industrial revolution with modernization and global competitiveness, they maintained a vigorous rural economy and encouraged a self reliant rural base and food self sufficiency. In more recent time the Japanese experience was adopted to meet the South Korean challenge. In 1960’s the South Korean economy grew at a rate of 10% per annum, supported by massive flows of foreign aid and private foreign investment. This pattern of development caused significant disparities in rural urban incomes and also led to large migration from rural to urban areas. To counter the adverse social and political consequences the government in 1970, initiated the Saemaul Undong or the New Community Movement, ‘in which people work together in order to construct better and richer villages, and as a consequence, a richer and stronger nation’.

The Saemaul Undong is a nationwide, integrated, rural development movement based on ‘the spirit of diligence, self-help and cooperation’. The government gives support to these self-help and cooperative efforts when they are faced with difficult problems. The support is in the form of financial (mainly supply of materials or equipment), administrative and technical assistance.

A different kind of compulsion came in China for a viable road to accumulation, the pattern of growth and employment after 1949 Maoist revolution. This pattern can be termed “socialism under non-classical conditions”. China was completely cut from access to external resources and forced to take a self reliant development pathway. To understand the dialectics underlying the development process of China, it is necessary to trace the ideological background of the Chinese Communist

Party. Almost from the beginning, there were ‘two lines’. The first line stood for a development philosophy whose basic tenets were the evolution of a collective functioning on the basis of mass democracy, elimination of the ‘Three Great Differences’ (city versus country, mental versus manual labour, worker versus peasant) and self-reliance. This approach was the economic analogue of the guerilla method of the Chinese Revolution. The other line stood for a highly centralized technocratic guidance of society towards modernization.

In 1949, when the Party took over power throughout China, the two-line struggle remained unresolved; indeed, the inner contradictions were to accentuate further in the face of concrete choices and decisions which had to be made. While the first line was pushing socialism in the countryside, the second, inspired by the Soviet example, emphasized the development of ‘modern’ industry. For almost a decade the two lines continued to guide the Chinese development in apparently ‘non-antagonistic’ contradiction. However, the consequences of the second line were: bureaucratization, centralization, pyramidization, relative neglect of local industry and agriculture and consequent shortages of articles of consumption; promotion of urban elitism; and the accentuation, rather than reduction, of the Three Great Differences.

Recognizing that China was moving away from the objective of the revolution, and that continuation of the second line would further aggravate the situation, in 1958 the Great Leap Forward was launched as a thrust intended to sharply accelerate the socialization of agriculture, the industrialization of the rural areas and, most importantly, the mobilization of the masses. Agriculture became the ‘Foundation’ and industry the ‘Leading Sector’; China would ‘Walk on Two Legs’, meaning the simultaneous development of large industry and a decentralized, self-reliant, local industrial sector with labour-intensive techniques.

Countries in the South East Asian Region who had incorporated their economies into the global system, without adequate strategizing found that the initial South East Asian “miracle” of “debt led” growth was not sustainable and the “miracle” collapsed. A few like Malaysia and Thailand which had tried to walk on two legs and a more balanced pattern of growth through sustaining their rural economies were less adversely affected.

In 1990, the Government of Sri Lanka established a Youth Commission to critically probe the roots of the problem of youth in the immediate context of three violent youth revolts in 1971, 1983 and 1987 – 1989, which engulfed the whole country. The Report was generally considered to be a frank analysis of the reality, not only in Sri Lanka, but also reflecting the problems of youth in most Asian countries. The rising distrust by large numbers of youth of a whole social order was sharply characterised in the Introduction to that Report as follows:

*“Forty five years of free education have resulted in near total literacy and significantly heightened expectations. Rampant consumerism and unrestrained ostentation of a small but highly visible section of society has lent itself to ever widening social differentials, disclosing a woeful lack of empathy on the part of the privileged few for the vast majority of society languishing in deprivation and want. .... His against this background that rural youth find themselves so thoroughly disenchantd with the present order. They seem to have no one to turn to; not even someone to complain to. .... Their lives are seen as series of broken promises. The yawning chasm between the town and the country has denied them the privilege of reaching out towards self-advancement in a congenial and fulfilling environment”.*

The far-sighted diagnosis of the Commission conveys the urgency for innovation and change of policies and practices, **rather than more of the same:**

*“Although relatively few took to arms in the pursuit of power, the stark injustice apparent to all as a blemish on society aggravated by the brezen arrogance with which they were perpetuated provided a sympathetic rural backdrop to the politics of violence. The political patronage in employment synonymous with the denial of merit has had a traumatic effect on the youth of the country who, even though they did not participate in the violence, appear to have harboured covert expectations of the dismantling of what they perceived as an inequitable system”*

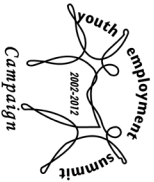
The following **framework of principles** was articulated by the Report for vouchsafing this strategic transition and response to the challenge of youth unemployment:

- More democracy; adequate devolution and dialogue;
- Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination in every sphere;
- Reduction of disparities, in respect of income, wealth, privileges and advantage;
- Efficient and optimum utilisation of scarce national resources;
- Elimination of extravagance and conspicuous consumption;
- Effective expeditious and inexpensive redress of grievances; and
- Values and institutions, which give experience to the diversity within our society.

Applying these fundamentals to Asian reality there are some commonalities in the challenges faced by these two groups - alienated rich youth and poor youth. But there is also a world of differences. In order to be more focused in this paper, let me concentrate on the more difficult challenge, which is that faced by poor youth (including poor young women) in developing countries, and the fundamental non-dogmatic strategic response and innovations required by all concerned to meet the challenge.

Not all poor societies of Asia are at the same stage of historical development. The interactions between internal development and global geo-political forces have sharpened the contradictions in these societies. It is necessary, however, to understand the nature of the transitions that have been attempted the incomplete governance and development agendas and from the macro to micro level best practices and lessons from the ground - the real possibilities for meeting the challenge of youth employment cannot be met. The major lesson that must inform the strategy seems to be that mobilization of youth itself must be the primary mechanism of accumulation in the Asian context, where people are its greatest asset.

The Heads of State of SAARC countries in 1991 established an Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation to examine the challenge of full employment for their people. The objective was to assess what had happened to the vision of economic development and full employment of the 1950's, the promise of a transfer of resources from rich countries to lift them out of poverty and which was supposed to make for a better world for all, not just for a few. A world in which, youth in South Asia had hope for a life of dignity after two centuries of colonial rule. Foreign Aid and foreign investment was supposed to provide an answer.



*“Poverty in the South Asian Region, based on conventional “poverty line” estimates is of the order of 440 million and is likely to increase.*

*The magnitude and complexity of this problem in South Asia is staggering. When coupled with the multifaceted crises currently facing South Asian countries, the problem is becoming unmanageable, not only putting democracy at risk but also posing a threat to the fabric of South Asian societies.”*

*Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation Report (1992)*

*“Fifty years into the life of our Republic we find that Justice - social, economic and political - remains an unrealised dream for millions of our fellow citizens. The benefits of our economic growth are yet to reach them. Not surprisingly, there is silent resentment among the masses against their condition erupting often in violent forms in several parts of the country. Tragically, the growth in our economy has not been uniform. It has been accompanied by great regional and social inequalities. Many a social upheaval can be traced to the neglect of the lowest of society, whose discontent moves towards the path of violence.”* K. R. Narayanan, *President of India (1997 - 2002)*

While the above reflections were addressed to conventional thinkers and policy makers, lessons from the ground in South Asian countries are showing that there are many youth, including those who are poor, who are differently motivated and who are not necessarily enamoured of affluent life styles and unsustainable consumer societies. They have creativity and idealism and want to lead contented lives with dignity in their local environments. How can this idealism and creativity be mobilized and organized to meet the challenge so that **poor unemployed youth in South Asia are not the problem but are part of the solution**. This requires a major paradigm shift in thinking and action on development itself.

### **Inadequacy of the Mainstream Development Strategies in Generating the Right to Work for All**

The dominant mainstream development thinking was inspired by a global agenda, over which South Asia had little control. Continuity and imitation of industrialized countries, rather than the need for building step by step on their values, resource base, knowledge base and people's creativity dominated the discourse, as well as, the political decision making processes. The inadequacy of the mainstream development strategies based as it was on narrow and capital intensive economics and technocratic approaches had been partially recognized in South Asia and other Southern Regions from the late 1940's in various critiques since Independence and de-colonization. Many international development conferences have critiqued mainstream development thinking and action and suggested various reforms.

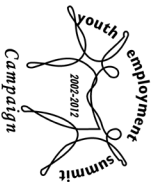
However, these critiques are still at the periphery of the discourse on nation building, good governance, social change and rights of the poor and youth in South Asia. These critiques were also fragmented and addressed only parts of the challenge of sustainable development. The initial addition of “social” to “economic” development by reformists and the more recent substitution of “human” development are hardly sufficient. The critiques did not lead to a coherent alternative vision and time bound strategies and actions. They failed to address the fundamental contradictions that had emerged and were continuing to deepen in reality. As population increased and more young people started looking for work, they had no coherent answer as to how could they find work and employment in a sustainable manner. There was also no in-depth realization that despite, political de-colonization there was a major new unfinished agenda on sustainable development,

providing work for future generations and forms of democratic decision making, which was the other side of the coin. These issues had to be addressed with greater clarity. A vision which is ideologically and sectorally holistic is necessary. At independence in the 1940's got caught up in several false debates. Historically there was this tremendous resurgence, a societal moment and social movement by the people that brought independence to most South Asian countries. It took the immediate form of a political movement, but had a content, which transcended the political agenda. It included several fundamentals in a holistic approach to the life of the people. It was expected to lead not only to political independence, but also to a good life and dignity for all. Mahatma Gandhi was, among others, at the center of the movement for social transformation. But the debate at that time, put simply, revolved around capitalism vs. socialism or modernization vs. tradition.

The result was an eclectic mix of strategies and policies. The elites and professionals took charge and exercised the power of managing the transition. The fundamentals in the strategies they adopted was not rooted either in the culture or the people's felt needs, on their right to participate in discussions that affected their lives or on resources that were in surplus. The focus was not on how to probe the reality and understand the complex Independence movement as a point of departure, and then go on to our own brand of a culturally rooted South Asian modernization and poverty eradication. Gandhi provided a very forward-looking kind of alternative modernity – starting at the base of our societies and in terms of fundamental cultural values. He said “the world has enough for everyone's need, but not for everyone's greed”. He said, “Break the barriers between mental and manual labour through constructive work”. He talked of work – constructive work, not employment. This approach combined work and leisure in a proper balance. These were based on culturally rooted values of sharing and caring and perspectives on the right to work and not being predatory on nature. He was a symbol and set a personal example, but died before the initial holistic vision of an alternative development and constructive work matured into practice.

Looking back, another phase of the old debate went on between Neo-Classicism leaving decisions to the market and Marxism with top down planning and projects, as if these were the only two options that were available for development. We vacillated in theory and practice between a kind of “top down” bureaucratic planning, sectoral projects, search for scarce financing and leaving major decisions even on social issues to the market. We did not question the underlying ideological orientations in terms of our cultural values and people. We did not ask if the private sector can become socially responsible. We imitated the centralized decision making processes in both systems – the centralized state and the private boardrooms. We opted for centralized representative democracy where the people had little say after electing representatives. We thought we could tranquilize the poor and poor youth with safety nets, welfare and charity and promises of a better world for all.

In the process we missed out on our greater self-reliance, potential for participatory development and participatory democracy at this early stage after independence, when the poor and the new generation of youth were poised to participate as subjects



in the process. The eclecticism of our policies and strategies excluded them from the benefits of development even in narrow economic terms. Fifty years of this mish-mash of theorizing and strategizing requires re-thinking,

### SAPNA's Experience

In order to review past experiences with development, poverty and employment, a Regional Network SAPNA was formed. SAPNA means vision or dream in all South Asian languages. SAPNA developed a search for alternatives. What is innovative about SAPNA is that right from its inception in mid 1970, SAPNA did not confine itself to a critique of the mainstream system as it worked. SAPNA investigated the South Asian reality from a South Asian perspective and began on the basis of lessons from the ground to identify non-dogmatic critical elements for an alternative pattern of development which included growth, the right of work for the large numbers of poor and youth. It was felt this could be a basis for an alternative transitional approach for a culturally rooted pattern of development and also democracy in South Asia. In this process the eradication of the worst forms of poverty and provision of work for the large numbers of poor youth in South Asia, in a given time frame, became the 'entry point'.

A fundamental difference in the SAPNA approach to poverty eradication, youth alienation and work for the poor youth was that **SAPNA did not consider the poor or poor youth as the problem, but considered them as part of the solution.** The second element in the difference is that the **SAPNA strategy for poverty eradication is based on a pro poor growth strategy** based on the efficiency of the poor and their participation as subjects and **not on a strategy of welfare, safety nets and charity**, which at best can only be residual. The SAPNA approach is not based on capital and finance, the factor in short supply, but on the creativity of poor youth, a factor in surplus, but not recognised. This creativity when combined with local natural resources and knowledge can also produce a holistic pattern of growth at the base of the economy. This provides a development pathway where these factors in surplus could help to generate more savings, more income work. The concept of formal employment was broader and the informal third sector was identified as an option for innovative work for poor youth. Reliance was not placed on conventional ways to finance this work through capital intensive and money led processes of the past. The role of the State was reviewed. Instead of being a bureaucratic State, it was turned into a support system and an enabling state.

The lessons from SAPNA's action research and transformational policy dialogues and engagements with various development partners are reflected in seven publications (with and eight on "The Role of the Facilitator in Participatory Development" forthcoming).

### Rural Employment Generation Programme

Supplementary wage employment programmes in India date back to the sixties when a rural manpower programme was introduced in areas where seasonal youth unemployment and under-employment of poor youth prevailed. The aim was to provide 100 days of employment per person to a targeted number. Over course of time after several changes and revisions this programme, later restructured as the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) in 1980, began works that would strengthen the rural economy and community infrastructure, which in turn would lead to the rapid growth of the rural economy and a rise in the incomes of the rural poor, the majority of those targeted were youth. The works were mainly executed through the decentralized Panchayati Raji (Local Government) institutions. The Centre and the States shared the costs equally. In addition, in 1983, the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) was introduced specifically to provide 100 days of guaranteed employment to at least one youth member in every landless household. Under both these programmes, employment was to be generated on works, which would help create durable assets for the communities in which the poor youth live in the rural areas. The experience of implementation of NREP/RLEGP showed that the type of assets created needed to be made economically more productive and that the people's involvement in identifying works needed to be strengthened. While the primary objective of JRY is the generation of employment in rural areas, the secondary objective is the creation of assets, which would strengthen the rural infrastructure of the poor youth. The wages payable are those prescribed as minimum wages in the States. At least 60 per cent of the funds must be spent on wages and 40 per cent on materials.

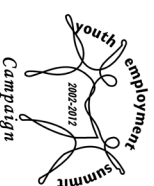
This programme is based on large budgetary support from the Indian Government with a total allocation of about Rs. 21,000 million in each of the last three years. Considerable success has been achieved under the JRY in the creation of employment of about 750 to 850 million man-days per year. In addition, over 1 million houses and over 320,000 irrigation wells have been constructed/dug for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes living below the poverty line.

## Employability

Knowledge and skills often help youth break the vicious cycle of poverty and become able to contribute effectively to their own communities. Employability is based on the knowledge systems available in the work environment and the use of these knowledge systems to prepare and strengthen the capacities of the youth and poor to meet the needs of the ever changing development crisis. It is of paramount importance to understand how young people meet a rapidly changing, uncertain life situation as a whole, including multiple social cultural and working environments. This challenge has recently become even more complex and demanding. According to ILO, "Economic, social and technological change is gathering pace and calls for continuous policy and institutional adaptation in order to meet new needs and seize the opportunities that are opening up in a rapidly integrating world economy."<sup>1</sup>

Knowledge and skills are the critical components of the employability; education and training play a greater role in enhancing the knowledge and skills of the youth. Though education and training involves a specific individual in the process the results are seen both in the economic and social spheres of that individual. It is a way of investment in the human resources; giving them education and training leading to increased knowledge, productivity and access to better opportunities and decent work to escape poverty and marginalization. It will also lead to enhanced opportunities for sustainable livelihoods. It will help realize the equity and equal opportunity. The productivity and the output of the economic enterprises will be more from a better trained workforce. While there is no denying that the education and training will lead to a learning which will transform the social and economic conditions of the communities, we should also ponder over the hard questions such as what is education and its relevance in local context, what skill sets are beneficial to whom and what are the existing knowledge systems in the community which can be easily transferred and adapted?

Before responding to the above questions, there is a need to understand that youth more than ever before want to take charge of their own lives and be viewed as equal partners and are willing to contribute to the economy and society. Acknowledging education and training as a right as stated in the European Education and Training Union's Charter of Fundamental Rights (2000), a greater emphasis should be placed on participatory approaches and traditional knowledge systems to explore the potential opportunities for all in education. The development of youth as active citizens and proactive players in sustainable development of their communities should become central to the objectives of training and education. All efforts must be focusing on making the relevant education available to youth so that they can learn, adapt and sustain it. As education is a life long learning process, the fundamental principle of education should be that it is well grounded in the local socio-economic and cultural context as these two things drive a person's ambitions and motives towards development.



This chapter while attempting to stress the importance of the knowledge systems and the role of traditional knowledge in enhancing the employability of the youth especially with reference to South Asian context will also evoke responses from the academicians and the practitioners regarding effective practices in education and transfer of skills that have reached out to millions of poor youth in rural communities to enhance their capacities so that they are productively engaged while being able to effectively address the developmental problems of their communities. The education and training should try to transform the youth into leaders and change agents of their communities not just be the passive recipients of the system. If the education is effectively making the youth employable it might also stop the urban migration of rural youth in search of a better life which they will not find often.

This cannot be done by the conventional supply driven education and training programs. It has been proven again and again by rising number of unemployed and college educated youth in most of the countries in the region. An innovative thinking and commitment to shift in paradigm is required to mobilize the communities and get their input into developing the knowledge bases and skills and then to transfer those skills. This will not only result in enhanced employability but also lead to rise of entrepreneurialism that affects the social and economic development of the youth and their communities.

*“A critical challenge that faces human society at the start of the twenty-first century is to attain full employment and sustained economic growth in the global economy and social inclusivity. It has been increasingly recognized that people’s endowment of skills and capabilities, and investment in education and training, constitute the key to economic and social development. Skills and training increase productivity and incomes, and facilitates everybody’s participation in economic and social life.” International Labor Organization*

## The Knowledge System

In the transition from the dominant macro-framework of development and democracy towards a new paradigm based on the interrelated fundamental premises and the micro-level development praxis, it is important to probe deeper and be unambiguous about what knowledge and whose knowledge is to be involved and how culturally relevant knowledge is to be used in catalyzing the transition to rigorous social transformation, sustainable development and eradication of the worst forms of poverty, in a given time frame. Three propositions will be made in the form of simple assertions. They are:

- The crisis of the modern knowledge system confirms the need for devising new methods of scientific inquiry for the next transition.
- The availability of many stocks of knowledge also means a greater choice of technology for sustainable development and poverty eradication.
- The traditional knowledge system of the poor now assumes greater validity and relevance in relation to sustainable development.

## The Crisis of the Modern Knowledge System

Knowledge is power. The modern knowledge system, incorporated into mainstream development thinking and action was deeply wedded initially to economics and single discipline analysis, with most of it unrelated to wider human needs.

Politically, it is inconsistent with its claims of equality and justice by disrupting local communities and polarising society into those with access to resources and power, and those without. Knowledge and Technology were critical elements in this process. The model of economic development (with or without the reformist human face as an additive) which has been critiqued unduly placed reliance on the modern Western knowledge system and the technology that went with it to initiate the process, along with capital, a factor in short supply in South Asia.

The claim of modern knowledge that the kind of development it generates can be extended to cover all situations and the entire globe has not been achieved. The cultural dislocations that have been created along side economic development have confirmed that culture and development are intertwined. This was highlighted as early as the 1950's, when the major "economic development" intervention and the aid relationship were initiated (Wignaraja 1953).<sup>2</sup> "While considerable thought has been expended in recent years in attempting solutions to the numerous immediate problems confronting developing countries, very little attention has been placed on the reality that development takes place within an established cultural pattern. The process of culture change that is set in motion during economic development tends for most part to be ignored. When it is recognised, it is merely hoped that time will bring about the necessary adjustments."

Though projected as being above and beyond culture and politics, and being scientific and rational, modern knowledge has tried to become most effective legitimiser for the homogenization of the world and the erosion of its cultural and ecological diversity and richness. Modern Western knowledge in posing as the universal and as inherently superior to the local and diversified knowledge has become exclusive and undemocratic. The ruling elites in industrial countries and the emergent elites in South Asia who adopted this paradigm of economic development also took over the limited perspective on choice of technology<sup>3</sup> ignoring the larger knowledge system and greater choice of technology rooted in the people. Further to disregard the knowledge people have, derived from the aesthetic, experiential and intuitive insights is to disregard the essential links between knowledge, culture and development. Now, recently the social scientists of different disciplines, are trying collectively to locate this knowledge that is responsive to their socio-cultural realities.<sup>4</sup> This re-discovery of indigenous scientific traditions also helps to build the holistic alternative paradigms based on a thorough understanding reality. To break out of this crisis of the modern Western knowledge system which penetrated South Asian value norms, a major "de-colonization of the minds" of scholars and practitioners alike is required.

## **The Premise of Many Stocks of Knowledge and Choice of Technology**

The premise of one stock of knowledge and technology, i.e. modern Western technology, located in industrialised countries, led to other false assumptions. Technology was used as objective criteria to judge the intrinsic level of development of human beings and society. Those societies that can sustain a higher level of technology were judged to be inherently superior. This gave a further moral basis for social subjugation and neo-colonialism. These consequences do not mean that this modern stock of knowledge cannot be used selectively with appropriate adaptation. What it means is that the massive intervention with so called external "experts" and transfer of technology needs to be questioned and evaluated, in the light of the greater technological choice now available.

The technical assistance programmes of the post World War II period and the extension worker concept are both part of this approach. There is sufficient evidence even from U.N., World Bank and other studies on Appropriate Technology to confirm that, by any standards, even in its own terms the kind of knowledge and technology transferred from industrialized to South Asian countries is neither sufficient nor appropriate. Even as there is general apathy towards transfer of capital from most industrialized countries today, there is also a growing body of opinion which confirms the view that the earlier kind of technology transfer may not be entirely desirable, for it may have helped to displace the people from their own stock of knowledge; it may have created “soft” societies, eroded the resource base, impoverished poor countries further and increased their dependence on rich countries.<sup>5</sup> This is not an argument against the selective transfer of modern technology or international development co-operation as such, but it questions the fundamental assumptions and the way things have worked.

Further, the transnational corporations, which control the stock of “modern” technology and which are still the main instruments for its transfer, continue to extract high prices for their know-how and equipment; the “borrowed”, highly capital-intensive technology which is continuing to be implanted in the South Asian countries has little relation either to real factor endowment, particularly labor, or to the existing technological stock born of the people’s knowledge system. The entire process of transferring technology in this manner is wasteful and the contradictions are numerous. In any event, after fifty years, even in its own terms, the technological capability to sustain a modern economic growth process in South Asia has not been built up, except possibly to some extent in India. Even here life for three hundred million Indians may be good, but there are another five hundred million.

It is also now possible to assert that a new process is emerging and is observable in the South Asian reality. As a result of a two-way interaction between committed South Asian “experts” and the people involved in a participatory action research, a new technology is gradually being created in these countries which do not exist in the categories referred to earlier, i.e. modern, intermediate and traditional. The experience here differs from the concept of “experts go learn from the people” (which was implicit in the Chinese cultural revolution) or “experts go tell the people” (which is what the transfer of technology and the extension service instrumentality is about). The new technology results from another variant of the new and still fragile Research and Development system, gradually being built up by committed experts and the people in South Asian countries living and working together over time to evolve a more humane society, using initially locally available resources and knowledge. It results from the committed expert or de-professionalized intellectuals identifying with the people and committing themselves to bringing sustainable development and social change.<sup>6</sup>

The fundamental argument here synoptically presented is that for sustainable development and poverty eradication there is a plurality of “stocks” of knowledge and a greater choice of technology than was available in the old framework of development. Without a participatory process this knowledge will not however surface. It also implies a possibility of a different and two-way knowledge transfer between rich and poor countries as structural and valuational changes in industrial countries themselves take place and a new international order in a positive sum game shapes up.

## The Traditional Knowledge System of the Poor

Given the intrinsic interconnectedness of knowledge and power in each culture, it is necessary first to examine the social basis of people's knowledge systems in South Asia. Given the onslaught of modernity over the last three hundred years - what remains of different traditions is a fractured and sometimes on the surface a distorted notion of what was. Traditional value systems themselves sometimes lost their validity as historical processes unfolded and the problems of sustainable development became more complex. The conventional approach to economic development had the devastating effect of suppressing local knowledge and technology. It equated economic poverty and lack of things with people's mental ignorance. A whole knowledge system which often provided more sophisticated and subtle solutions to the survival of the people and the totality of their lives were ignored. There was a great deal of rational decision making implicit in what South Asian poor actually did, which was part of the cultural heritage. This was in its own terms scientific validation.

People had an intimate knowledge of their environment and natural resource base. This was often far superior to those brought in by many foreign development "experts". They often knew what to eat, how to grow the traditional foods, cost effectively and with the least risk through time tested methods. There were systems of water storage and management that were both scientific and efficient. The seeds issue has brought to the fore the variety of plant life and their uses in peasant societies, which was part of the knowledge system. Since the forests were their life blood, poor people knew how to use forests for food, fodder and medicinal herbs and permit nature to regenerate itself. They knew that extensive lumbering and felling of forests for the modern industrial sector and distant consumerism also would affect climate and rainfall.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, the people had developed many cost effective preventive health systems, on the assumption that prevention was better than cure. Their holistic approach to life required them to be healthy, as sickness prevented them from working and this in turn prevented them from producing and generating the income to meet their basic needs and those of their families. They knew how to balance work and leisure time, so that there was a continuous renewal of their creative energy. The *Vedic* knowledge system and the *Yoga* techniques that went with it for instance, reinforced this and helped to bring out human potential and capability that lay dormant in people.<sup>8</sup> These techniques are now being widely disseminated in industrial countries and even being incorporated into the technology for survival in outer space, apart from its relevance for human development. *Ayurveda*, the six thousand year old Science of Life, practiced in India, is another such example.

While not romanticizing the traditional knowledge system of the poor the argument here is essentially that this traditional knowledge was a process in which many people share. It is neither elitist nor eclectic. There is an element of experiential learning which became systematized, scientifically validated and was shared communally for sustainable development. The conclusion is inescapable that the sequence for reversing the adverse consequences of past development processes, would be to start with the traditional knowledge people have and build on it, drawing upon the wide range of technological choices available.

During the 1970's and 1980's in South Asia a number of institutions have emerged which are involved in participatory action

research (PAR) for poverty eradication. The focus of their work was precisely to see how people's creativity and their knowledge system could be a basis of building countervailing power and to exert vigilance and correction over processes pertaining to the all round development of their lives and that of the communities in which they lived. This in turn related to the internal and external transformation and social change necessary for their survival and sustainable development.

PAR combines scientific research, informal education and political action. It also implies creation of reliable knowledge for use in the process of transformation by committed action researchers and the vulnerable people themselves.

In knowledge management, new Information Technology has emerged as a strategy in the war on youth unemployment and poverty. To channel IT to the poor youth is still part of the long revolution in bringing about necessary social change and cannot be romanticized in the general rhetoric of globalization. The knowledge gap, the linkages between traditional knowledge, conventionally transferred technology from industrial countries and strengthening of various knowledge management partnerships for using IT as a strategy is still in its relative infancy. New Information Technology is a tool and can help build sustainable development and democracy for youth employment and poverty eradication. But it can also be a tool for new limitations and controls on information and communication.

In Andhra Pradesh (India) and in Malaysia, some macro framework of IT and knowledge management for poor rural youth is being experimented. Scattered experiments can be seen in the Swaminathan Foundation's biotechnology and IT villages, in Rajasthan the Access to Information Movement and in Bahn Bel in the Pakistan Sindh desert area with its IT Kiosks for poor nomadic farmers, etc. But there are many hard questions to be raised and lessons to be learned on the nexus between new information technology, poverty and youth employment.

The lessons have yet to be drawn and translated into specific macro framework policies and programs for enhancing the employability of youth. There has to be stronger commitment to the paradigm shift and appreciation of local knowledge systems must be demonstrated. Local knowledge system needs to be revitalized using PAR and then systems must be placed for transfer of this relevant knowledge and skills.

Some of the case studies presented here are the examples of the participatory approaches to that are based on using the local traditional knowledge systems to upgrade the employable and entrepreneurial skills of the rural people in general and youth in particular.

### **An Agricultural Bank as a Catalyst for Training and Income Generation Activities**

The Nepalese economy is predominantly agriculture-based with over 90 percent of its active labour force dependent on this sector for income and employment. Agriculture accounted for 54 percent of the national GDP. An increasing trend in Nepal is environmental degradation and poverty with 40 percent of the population below the poverty line. **The Small Farmer Development Programme** in Nepal was initiated as a field action-cum-research project in 1975 by the Agricultural Development Bank of Nepal (ADB/N), through a specialized window set up for this purpose with initial help from the Asian Development Bank. The general objectives of the SFDP, as formulated by the ADB/N, are to improve the quality of life of small farm families and rural youth, by providing credit and basic services. This credit was intended for exploitation of local resources, expanding the knowledge base and marketable skills of farmers through the upgrading of locally available technology, raising income through

employment creation for youth in rural areas and increased production and promoting self-reliance through community and family involvement in the decision-making process.

During the 16-year old implementation of the program, ending mid-July 1991, over 9,000 ha land has been brought under irrigation, benefiting about 16,000 families. Cost per hectare of a Community Irrigation Project has been Rs. 8,000 where as the cost of similar projects implemented by the Government has been Rs. 100,000 per hectare. During the same period, the literacy rate increased from 59 to 76 per cent for males and 15 to 18 per cent for females. Similarly, over 1,800 drinking water supply schemes benefiting 29,000 persons were commissioned. About 1,275 ha land was brought under tree plantation and 174 bridges and 950 km of trail were constructed with public participation. Likewise, over 132,000 families benefited from the distribution of vegetable seeds and smokeless stoves, over 4,200 families benefited from agro-processing services provided by the water turbines and over 32,000 small farmers have received some form of skills training.

Substantial positive gains were also achieved in the social front. The school enrolment rate in SHDP areas increased from 55 per cent to 74 per cent for boys and from 30 per cent to 41 per cent in the case of girls. The proportion of families adopting family planning devices increased from 24 per cent to 30 per cent. Farmer families also reported considerable reduction in time spent to fetch drinking water. Similarly, the number of families with toilet facilities increased from 26 per cent to 83 per cent. Also marked improvement was noticed in the nutritional status of children.

### **Work without Contractors and Bondage**

Pakistan shows a rapid rural urban migration with poor youth in search of work. It was in this context that Akhtar Hamid Khan, the pioneer of the Comilla Small Farmer Programme in Bangladesh began the Orange Pilot Project in 1980, in the biggest Karachi Abadi (urban slums) in Karachi city. Poverty, youth unemployment and environmental sanitation were dominant problems.

The OPP models consist of understanding what people and the informal sector are doing themselves for improving their conditions and then supporting them with technical and managerial advice and credit in improving what they are already doing. Work by the communities is done with their own resources and without contractors. This makes the development work affordable to the communities. Through the OPP programmes a number of activists have emerged in the Township. Old local level CBOs have been strengthened as a result and new CBOs have been created. One such CBO is the Ghaziabad Falahi Committee (GFC) operating in an area of Orangi and carrying out development works on its own and negotiating with government for partnership in physical and social sector programmes.

The OPP does not fund development but by providing social and technical guidance it encourages the mobilisation of local resources and the practice of cooperative action. Based on these principles, the OPP has evolved a number of programmes, which are described below. A lesson learnt from these programs is that based on local resource and local technology, development is sustainable. Evaluation of OPP show that they selectively catalysed cost effectively income generation and employment for poor youth in Karachi city.

## **Equity**

With the increased feminization of poverty, women found an important place on the development agenda of many international organizations. Most countries now recognize that investing in and empowering young women and girls as one of the most cost effective and efficient ways to advance the development of their countries. Still women in many countries in the region face the disparities in employment, education and training, remuneration, social security entitlements, facilities to establish their own enterprises and other aspects of work. Women still account for a disproportionately large group of the working poor. Social expectations often put pressure on girls to marry and bear children before they are ready. Hence in order not to

marginalize the gender issues in work, mainstreaming should be a priority item on the employment agenda and should be monitored regularly to determine whether concrete progress has been made. While gender equity occupies the major development discourse, let us not forget the other forms of equity issues related to the social and geographic discrimination and isolation, marginalizing youth with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and other health disorders. How do we include all the youth irrespective of their gender, race, geographic positioning, health and education and skill level to assert their place and take charge of the development of their communities?

The framework that has influenced the conventional development process in the past half-century assumed that there were 'developed' countries and 'developing' countries and that if the experience of the former, along with some capital and technology was transferred to the latter the gap would be narrowed. The objectives and processes were viewed in economic terms and great reliance was placed on economic factors and centralized decision-making to achieve results. This framework assumed that rapid economic growth could take place if there was central planning and control of the economy (by the state or the private sector) as a 'top-down' process, with emphasis on industrialization, modernization and urbanization. Unfortunately this has resulted into growth but not equitable distribution of fruits of development. The transfer of the modern stock of technology from industrialized countries to the poorer countries, mainly through "market" processes along with finance, created islands of modernization and excellence, but as has been repeatedly mentioned, left large numbers of people uninvolved and without benefit. In fact the overall process resulted in a dual society, and a further impoverishment of rural areas where the majority of people live through both a destruction of the environment and transfer of resources first from rural to urban areas and then back into the industrialized countries. The massive reverse flow of resources is only now being clearly identified as these countries themselves move into the debt crisis.

Recent work- putting together national and international income distribution databases suggests much cause for concern. Branko Milanovic (1999) found that the distribution of individual incomes and expenditures to be more unequal in 1993 as compared to 1988. His study found world income inequality to be very high. The richest one per cent of people in the world receives as much as the bottom 57 per cent. The 1999 Human Development Report offers more evidence of the growing global inequality. The experiences from South East Asia prove that the economic liberalization without ensuring the provisions for redistribution will only lead to income inequality.

Some of the following case studies will demonstrate how the poor masses have organized themselves to address the issues of equity through their own innovation and imagination.

### **The Triple Burden of Poor Young Women in a War Zone**

The Institute of Nursery, Studies and Gender Development (INSIGD) is an organization, which has been operating as a pre-school teachers programmed in the war zone, in the Chankanaï Division in Jaffna District from 1987. They were compelled to suspend their operations in 1995 when the war reached its zenith and their building and equipment were destroyed. This disruption, however, led Mrs. Ponnalar Rajeswaram, the Founder Director to offer her services to the German Technical Cooperation - Jaffna Rehabilitation Programme (GTZ/JRP) as a Social Mobilisation Consultant and

help make the GTZ/JRP sustainable, with the affected people, mainly youth, taking ownership in the rehabilitation process, going beyond relief to development. In 1999, with support from various organizations in Sri Lanka to further its activities in social mobilisation and empowerment of poor young women and provide work and a variety of support activities to the young women and children affected by the conflict.

A participatory process of resource mobilisation was followed to bring out the creativity, residual strengths and existing capacities of these poor young women, who were a resource. The knowledge system in the culture was a second resource. They built a new process on lessons from their coping system and survival capacities – during the war years – using every available resource efficiently. Nothing was wasted.

In 2003, the INSGD Programme was further focused with the formation of youth clubs and career guidance activities. Various youth programmes were intensively organized and sustained. They took the form of work orientation and awareness seminars, management training, self-employment and small and medium enterprise development programmes. In the war zones, a large housing reconstruction programme got underway. Instead of training young people in the abstract, training for specific activities in the construction industry was undertaken. The training was not merely lectures, but also included work-study programmes, so that youth could move directly from training to work, in their own locations. Large number of young militants could be involved in a transformative process from “guns to ploughshares” and other productive peace-building activities.

## SEWA

The failure of trade union movements to address the issue of the double burden of poor women, led to the formation of the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in Gujarat, India. As has been mentioned from the struggle for political independence, SEWA is based on ‘Antodaya’ meaning starting with the poorest is a major principle of any Gandhian movement. This principle along with the need for reform of the trade unions to take note of gender equity concerns, contributed to SEWA’s emergence. Self-employed young women both in the urban and rural areas had no formal employer to bargain with; they had no means of production and were borrowing at high rates of interest for their day-to-day existence. The early assumption of the SEWA was that if these poor young women were linked to the formal institutional credit system, they could, at least, become independent of the money lenders. This assumption was gradually changed with experience, as these formal credit institutions ignored the specific needs of these young women, SEWA established its own Bank. The other movement which contributed to SEWA’s growth was the women’s movement in India itself. As the women’s movement gathered momentum it became apparent that the struggle of poor women went beyond the gender conflicts and purely economic issues to an inter-related set of problems. These included including the social, cultural and political aspects, which also had to be addressed holistically if poor young women were to benefit. It also became clear that poor women needed a more comprehensive basis for organisation. Once SEWA was organised, very quickly it set up its own Bank among other activities. The trade union of poor women in the informal sector and the Bank became mutually reinforcing, in both the struggle against injustice of various kinds as well as for sustainable development through the building of alternative cooperative economic and social structures, institutions and partnership. The process is fast multiplying within Gujarat and to other parts of India. In addition, SEWA itself continues its advocacy role on behalf of self-employed women. It was at SEWA’s insistence that the Government of Gujarat established an unorganized Labour Board to give the same protection to self-employed women as is enjoyed by industrial workers. In 1986, as a result of a revolution in the SEWA Annual Conference of the preceding year, the Prime Minister appointed a Commission for Self Employed Women with the Head of SEWA as the Chairperson. Along with other similar programmes SEWA contributed in the setting up of the DWCRAP programme of the Government of India. DWCRAs, for the most part, an integrated programme of delivered services for women and children, and under it banks are required to ensure that 30 per cent of their loans should go to women.

## Entrepreneurship

Poverty eradication is intricately connected to creation of entrepreneurship among youth who are not only the leaders of tomorrow but also are capable of leading today. Overreliance on public and private sectors for job creation will only lead

to hopelessness and despair as the number of jobs is decreasing. The goal should be to impart business skills among youth to address the major development challenges like energy crisis, water and sanitation, ICT, HIV/AIDS and other health issues. Efforts should also be made to bring about socio-economic development of the communities through the entrepreneurial efforts of the youth. All the international organizations working for youth development should take concerted action for creation of a Global Youth Fund to promote small scale enterprises by youth. This will create an enabling environment for the entrepreneurial culture that encourages, supports and strengthens the youth entrepreneurship.

Prof. Yunus in his delivery of the Commonwealth Lecture (2003) blamed the wrong conceptualization of the reality around the life as the major contributor to poverty in addition to the economic and social systems, institutions that were placed and drew the attention to five main issues to be revisited to eradicate the poverty and reach the MDG #1

- widening the concept of employment
- ensuring financial services even to the poorest person
- recognising every single human being as a potential entrepreneur
- recognising social entrepreneurs as potential agents for creating a world with peace, harmony, and progress
- recognising the role of globalisation and information technology in reducing poverty

Enterprise development holds the key to many of the livelihood problems being faced by the youth today. But at the same time to think that lack of financial support is the only impediment to youth entrepreneurship is naive. The financial support has to be combined with the mentoring for an initial period of time. Here again, the multi stakeholder involvement is crucial in terms of providing all round support to the budding entrepreneurs. Any program of enterprise development that promotes socio economic development warrants a strong research foundation and the feasibility analysis of the various types of enterprise activities. A participatory process in which youth are integral should be followed to do these kinds of studies.

An enterprise development needs the identification of the entrepreneurial opportunities that can be made available to both the educated and semi educated youth. Providing access to financial and other business development services is extremely important aspect of enterprise development and this has to be done through multi stakeholder involvement. Micro-credit has a proven record of reaching the un-reached and making the un-bankable bankable. Mentoring for an initial period will help the entrepreneurs to establish well in the business. So innovative and participatory approaches of identifying the entrepreneurial opportunities, feasibility analyses, business development services, access to credit and mentoring should be developed. Multi stake holders like educational institutions, training institutions, Government, credit agencies and business development services should come together to involve youth and provide them with skills for business savvy.

CMEY is the **Chief Minister's Empowerment of Youth Programme** an important scheme of the Government of Andhra Pradesh launched in 1996-1997. The objective is to create employment opportunities to unemployed and landless youth forming youth associations consisting of 5 or more youth members. The primary objective of CMEY is employment generation for youth by cultivating the habit of thrift

regularly and enabling them to taking up economic activities of their choice in the form of “self-help” groups. Thus this programme is expected to provide a platform for economic development of youth through a “Micro-credit mechanism”. Since inception, a total number of 38,615 youth entrepreneurial units have been grounded with an outlay of Rs.420 crores.

**Bharatiya Yuva Shakti Trust** (BYST) started its operations in 1991 with the launch of its youth entrepreneurship development programme from Delhi. The year 1991 was a crucial one as it was the pilot phase of the programme. BYST is keen on working with young people in the age group of 18 - 35, who are either unemployed or underemployed. While maintaining the partnership relations with major corporations and industrial groups in India and being incubated by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), it started identifying the young entrepreneurs (18 - 35) and provide them with access to financial resources and the mentoring services to impart sustainable business skills. In 1994, it started the Rural Programme in collaboration with Escort Rural Development. Since then BYST Faridabad has been working as a catalytic agency supporting rural youth not only by means of financing but also by providing them guidance through mentoring.

As a partner, Escorts played an indelible role in providing direct support to BYST through donations to the corpus and also support in kind in areas such as infrastructure facilities, awareness generation, program monitoring and the like. In the same year, BYST was approached by DIAGEO, a multinational, to launch a youth entrepreneurship development program in Pune (Western India).

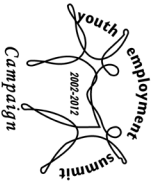
The most remarkable feature of the Trust is that it provides each youth entrepreneur with a Mentor on a one-to-one basis. They follow the ‘Guru-Shishya’ tradition where the teacher not only teaches, but guides and helps to develop the disciple. The Mentor gives personalised advice, maintains regular contact with the business, monitors progress, and helps in solving problems and in developing business. The interested professionals (Mentors), in turn, get a wide range of first-hand business experience and the satisfaction of helping disadvantaged youth.

BYST supports ventures both in the manufacturing and servicing sector, turning job seekers into job creators. In the last decade, BYST has supported a wide variety of enterprises, from Doll Making to Desktop Publishing, and Herbal Cosmetics to Hi-Tech Electronics, thereby enabling wealth generation. Business proposals from potential young entrepreneurs are welcome directly or through vocational schools, entrepreneurial training institutions and well established grass root and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Assistance is provided to help formulate these proposals. On approval of the proposal, BYST will provide a whole range of Business Development Services along with a Mentor, who gives guidance until the venture takes off. (Source: BYST Website)

**The White Revolution** of India in general refrain of the rich getting richer in the successful examples of Indian agricultural development, the growth of the dairy industry in Gujarat deserves special mention as it has mainly benefited small and medium farmers, youth and even those with very little or no land. The Anand Milk Union Limited (AMUL) was born in 1946 as a protest against private milk traders who were ruthlessly exploiting the producers. Starting with a few hundred litres of milk collected from eight societies, AMUL (operating mainly in one district in Gujarat) has grown into an institution that is worth over Rs.50 million and was owned by the poor and mainly young members (including women). This cooperative has been mainly built up over the years from operating surpluses.

In addition to providing an efficient collective mechanism for marketing milk, initially from the buffalo, AMUL has taken various measures like artificial insemination service, a veterinary service, supply of high quality concentrates and fodder development programmes are some of the measures which have been made possible cooperative action, at a very modest cost.

Through the National Dairy Development Board, “AMULs” are being replicated successfully in different parts of the country, bringing to millions of small and marginal farmers a meaningful and remunerative new activity which primarily translates their labor into value. As 60 per cent of the milk produced in the country is produced by small and poor farmers, they will be the major beneficiaries of the program. The poor women and youth who produce small quantities of milk daily are paid immediately at the collecting center. Usually the cash for milk is paid immediately and hence these milk producers will have some money on hand and learn to save at low level of income and learn to invest. This process of saving and



investment is very different from inundating them with micro credit before they learn to save. AMUL is the best example of the positive force in Gandhian values. It inspired a group of sincere social workers, mainly young, to undertake the arduous task of organizing the poor and youth against an exploitative system. That they succeeded at all, in spite of the continuation of the iniquitous social structure, is a tribute to their dedication, skills and shrewdness. The creation of a motivated group of young people and the multiplication of the pattern elsewhere in India has valuable lessons for youth employment and resource mobilization.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

Today as we are witnessing the natural and man made calamities and environmental degradation, it is imperative that the environmental sustainability is a must. But for that, equally important is ensuring productive livelihoods for the younger generation so that they value the sustainability. Interestingly they both are not mutually exclusive and hence both can be pursued jointly and collaboratively. The World Summit on Sustainable Development presented a unique opportunity to ensure that environmental sustainability fully and effectively achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Development for the poor is pursued within a framework of long-term sustainability. Poverty eradication is at the heart of achieving global sustainability.

As the youth are facing the unprecedented challenges to their livelihoods, their identities, their institutions, and their sense of place in the evolving global village, how do they cope with the continued economic and ecological crises? Conventional approaches that promote high rates of economic growth have not led to sustained or evenly distributed benefits. What the world requires is a fundamental and far-reaching change in the attitudes and behavior of its citizens, governments and corporations if it is going to provide for a sustainable future. At the community level, focus should be on achieving a deeper understanding of community processes and livelihoods systems, particularly in developing countries.

Social responsibility for generating youth employment and eradicating poverty through participation and empowerment of the poor also relates to ecological responsibility. Several public and private sector programmes are now being compelled to ensure sustainability through being guardians of the nature resource base of the planet in order to protect the inheritance of future generations.

South Asian cultures have placed great emphasis on non-predatory people to nature relationships, as a means to sustainable development, preserving the environment, wise use of resources in the interest of youth. For poor youth, they are even more deeply dependent on access to and careful use of natural resources, which are referred to as “commons”. There have been many conflicts, when this people to nature balance is altered either by the state or by those vested interests with power. These conflicts are exacerbated as economic development in narrower terms spreads. As population grows, new communities are established, markets expand, new labour-saving productive technologies are employed. The profit motive erodes the wise use of renewable resources. The assumption that planned development and modernisation of all sectors of productive life would increase incomes and work for all is now being debated widely. High consumption levels for the few and elite are further eroding the resources needed for survival, simple livelihood patterns and work for poor youth, who were dependent on renewable resource base for their basic needs.

In the South Asia, the problem manifests itself not only in depletion of forest resources and forest cover needed for rain and replacement of forest diversity, but also affects the situation regarding water use. Not only does this pattern of development pollute surface water, but also with large dam projects the adverse impact on the poor and poor youth has worsened. The Gandhian and Tagore view of nature was to see it as a source of light and air, water and food and reinforced the dominant cultural values linking people and nature in a mutually beneficial and sustainable relationship. In the new social movements and experiments one sees glimpses of an older civilization rhythm in their relationships of people to people and people to nature and people to their knowledge system. The Chipko Movement with the poor women hugging the forest trees not only illustrates the understanding of the need for harmony with nature, but also demonstrates the ability of organised poor women to prevent destruction of nature with all its adverse consequences and bio-diversity; the eco-system and their survival resource base. The work of the Wasteland Development Board in India is another illustration of an attempt to reverse past processes and regenerate the natural resource base. Some such movements and experiments as they now exist are fragile, while in other cases they still remain only at the levels of an experiment or of the desirable. Whatever their degree of manifestation in reality is, these relationships needs to be further reinforced as part of an ongoing process of social transformation towards sustainable development.<sup>9</sup>

The **Chipko** movement, a classic example of non-violent resistance and struggle by thousands of ordinary hill folk without the guidance and control of any centralized apparatus, recognized leadership or full-time cadre, has in the last decade and a half not only spread across the Himalayas, but also inspired similar struggles in other parts of India. Whilst other consequences of this unique movement will be discussed later, one crucial ideological shift that it implied in the popular discourse on these issues was that it focused attention on the centrality of renewable resources (soil, air, water, trees) in the livelihoods and lives of people in our country. Chipko, as a voice from the margins of Indian civil society, thus managed to demonstrate, quite unlike the concerns of India's elite classes, that the crucial environmental conflicts are not just city-based (pollution) or related to the depletion of non-renewable resources useful for industry, but arise directly from the philosophical premises embedded in the modern Western and capitalist vision that seeks to subjugate and colonize nature via technology in the service of man.

As a result both of increased state/elite sensitivity to declining forest cover, with all its attendant implications, and the growing immiseration and pauperization of forest-based communities and people as a result of growing encroachment by industry (both state and private) on dwindling forest resources, small and large struggles have broken out and commanded attention all over India. The Chipko struggles in the Himalayan region, the Appiko movement in the western Ghats which is actively involved in struggles against the illegal over-felling of trees and in replanting forest lands with multipurpose broad-leave tree species, the struggle against the replacement of Sal trees by teak species in the forest areas of Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh (the Jharkhand-Bastar belt), resistance to the monoculture plantation of commercial chir pine in Himachal Pradesh, the uprooting of eucalyptus plantations pushed primarily by government and industry for the benefit of paper and rayon fibre extraction industries, the dozens of voluntary efforts engaged in massive afforestation (both for employment generation and to protect exposed lands); these struggles command the greatest spread and involvement, and have in turn had the greatest impact.

These struggles also led to a shift in the discourse on forests, to a realization that the equation of forest to timber (an extractable resource for industry) was what had contributed in the previous two and a half centuries to a decline in forest cover, and to a realization also that the allegation that it was local communities in search for fuel and building material who were responsible for deforestation was fundamentally fallacious. This shift in discourse is best epitomized by the slogans that the different struggles threw up. In Chipko the cry was "What do the forest bear? Soil, water and pure air" as against the dominant notion, "What do forest bear? Profit on resin and timber!" Similarly the Jharkhand struggles highlighted the differences between sal (a tree species which gave the forest communities leaves for fodder, nuts and fuel wood) and saqwan (teak). Similar struggles

by youth and the poor can be seen against land use, big dams, pollution, and exploitation of marine resources. These struggles are characterised by new partnerships and modes of intervention, which are beginning to have an impact on policy and the consciousness of people on the need for addressing the causes of environmental degradation. Source: *Extract from Harsh Sethi, New Social Movements in the South- Empowering the People, ZED Books, 1993*

### **Beyond problem analysis: Using appreciative inquiry to design and deliver environmental, gender equity and private sector development projects**

ISSD and MYRADA, India along with network of NGOs and community groups used Appreciative Inquiry to plan and carry out village-level projects that emphasize the promotion of gender equity, the diversification of income-generating opportunities, and the improvement of local environmental conditions. The objective of the project was to field test a new participatory development approach called Appreciative Inquiry in rural India. During the project, over 804 people from 70 different organizations including participants from Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Burma received training in "Appreciative Inquiry." An estimated 500 community based organizations, representing about 1,000 people, participated in appreciative inquiry workshops. This included self-help affinity groups; self help group federations, teachers associations, watershed development associations, watershed implementation committees, village forest committees, village health committees, children's clubs, local farmers associations, community health groups, and others. Participants also included numerous individuals and families.

In the field, appreciative inquiry is remarkable. The approach generates great enthusiasm and cooperation in developing a group vision built on the collective strengths and aspirations of its members. It also produces strategic plans by which local people can turn their dreams into reality. It presents great potential as a tool to promote sustainable development and secure livelihoods at the local level. Appreciative inquiry is consistent with livelihood approaches because it provides a way by which the assets and skills used to maintaining village livelihoods can be better understood and built on. (Source: ISSD)

### **Enhancing Sustainable Livelihoods in Drought-Prone Areas: Building on Adaptive Strategies**

Zimbabwe was implemented in the Makaha Ward of Mutazi Rural District Council of the Mashonaland East Province and in the Mlanbapele Ward of the Gwanda Rural District Council of Matebeleland South Province of Zimbabwe. The objectives of the project were to enhance community capacity to adapt to shocks and stresses and harness sustainable livelihood options; demonstrate that local adaptive strategies, when reinforced by appropriate policy and technologies reduce community vulnerability to drought; apply the sustainable livelihoods approach to land and biodiversity conservation in arid and semi-arid lands; sensitize policy-makers about the linkages between policies, community adaptive strategies, science and technology and sustainable livelihoods of the poor; and help policy-makers redesign policies and the policy-making process to help households and communities achieve sustainable livelihoods.

The project faced a number of challenges during its implementation period like: the delivery of the project from a distance, ENDA-Zimbabwe's top-down rather than bottom-up approach to the design of the CDMP and in the initial stages of the delivery of the project made community participation in decision-making difficult, lack of expertise and capacity to handle the policy component, a minor drought of 1997 resulted in the borehole in Gwanda and usual budgetary and staff constraints.

Despite the challenges described above, at the end of the two years and nine months, the project had increased each community's ability to be self-reliant, enhanced their capacity to engage in development dialogue with government and donor agencies, created awareness among the community about the value of local knowledge and of their own capacities for self-reliance. The communities' understanding of the integration of indigenous and contemporary knowledge, adaptive strategies, and their relationships to sustainable livelihoods was greatly enhanced. A number of appropriate technologies for soil and water conservation practices were demonstrated. Demonstrations of various technologies in the gardens and farmers' fields, field and garden days, farmer educational tours, and classroom training were provided by project officers. More than 80 agricultural/water/

soil conservation demonstration plots were established to compare old and new methods and for communities to appreciate and understand the benefits of the simple and appropriate technologies. The technical skills and management training provided by the project, empowered the communities, enhanced their identity and solved some of their problems. The project also strengthened the link between the community and the local government representatives in the area.

The project manager outlined the concept of the sustainable livelihood framework at a rural district development committee (RDDC) meeting. It was through this type of meeting and visits to the project that rural district government officials and NGOs were made aware of the link between local knowledge and technologies and an enabling policy environment for sustainable development. The acceptance and appreciation of the sustainable livelihood approach by the rural districts is evident by their request for the project to be extended to cover entire districts rather than wards. (Source: *JISD*)

## Empowerment

The most critical issue in the world today is that of increasing marginalization of its youth population. While the youth population is increasing, their role in socio-economic development remains unclear and the majority remains at the margin of the development spectrum. Youth unemployment and lack of opportunities to engage in meaningful productive activity is a clear indication of this problem. So, it a great challenge to nurture and harness the youth potential so as to transform it into a dynamic force for socio-economic development of their communities. The first MDG of reducing the global poverty by half by 2015 can be achieved only when the youth population is given a definitive role and responsibilities. By placing youth at the center of the process of development, and making them the part of the solution has to be achieved through understanding of youth's problems and aspirations from their own perspective.

*“The Participation of youth is indispensable for a societal change and for deepening democracy. They are the leaders of tomorrow. They are not a problem to be solved, but problem solvers themselves.”*

Rudolph, HH (2000), “*Jugend in aufschwung*”, GTZ Department.

### **Global Competitiveness and Self Reliant Participatory Processes: Moving on Two Complementary Fronts in the Transition**

We have to confront the challenges in South Asia and other regions at the beginning of the millennium not only by reviewing our past actions, but also by learning the hard lessons and then to re-vision our thinking, policies, institutions and methodologies. This involves raising the levels of awareness of the people, particularly the youth releasing their creativity, encouraging them to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives, learning to use local natural resources more efficiently and to managing the available knowledge systems better. These critical factors for generating new employment and work are being neglected.

Capital, the factor in short supply in the so-called developing countries was seen as the main input into the process of empowerment. Internal capital accumulation and savings, it was assumed, would be supported by free and massive inflows of foreign capital and technology. The cumulative benefits of growth in the modern sector - public or private - were

expected eventually either to 'trickle down' automatically or at best to be handed down in an administrative fashion or 'delivered' to the poor. Material accumulation either in public or private forms were expected to solve other human problems. This has not happened. The widening gap between the industrialized and South Asian countries, the results of the so-called green revolution which initially helped the rich farmer get richer and made the poor poorer within these countries, the massive transfer of resources from poor countries to rich, illustrated both the danger and the limited relevance of this framework to the majority of people in South Asia. They confirmed the limitations of the narrow, techno-economic model of development, even in its own terms.

Throughout the 1960s and early 1970s some token attempts were made to modify the narrow techno-economic notions of development and to affect some reforms. The reformists argued that a modified framework of economic development could still be made to work 'efficiently' if (a) redistribution or social justice were built into the objectives; (b) elements of popular participation (mainly some consultation with the people or manipulation of the people) in an essentially top-down planning process were allowed; (c) a continuous process of transfer of a proportion of the income and technology from industrialized to the countries could be ensured, particularly through the UN system and its specialized agencies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and Regional Development Banks in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

Participation was of central concern to this alternative development strategy in wider human terms and which can provide work for poor youth. It is now being increasingly recognized that the reshaping and development of poor societies and funding employment and work for poor youth in a more balanced and sustainable way cannot be undertaken without the participation of the poor youth as subjects in that process.

At the Seventh SAARC Summit in Dhaka, in April 1993, the Heads of State unanimously endorsed the Poverty Commission recommendations and reiterated their commitment with Dhaka Consensus to continue to accord the highest priority to the eradication of the worst forms of poverty, create more work and self employment for the poor, within a ten year period. What is also interesting is that the Heads of State of SAARC underscored the critical link between the success of national and regional efforts aimed at poverty eradication creation of work and the external factors affecting growth and development. They urged all major actors in the world economic scene, particularly the industrialized countries and the multilateral and regional financial institutions and non-governmental organizations to create an enabling international atmosphere and a new partnership that is supportive of this participatory poverty eradication programmes and creative work for the poor in South Asia. They felt this would require a new dialogue with donors to transfer more targeted resources to this innovative process.

If participation means democracy, representative democracy as now practiced is a singularly limited form; people participate in elections. But such formal participation is a mere token, unless power is shared, particularly at local level. It is not a matter merely of decentralization, but of devolution. Participation also means trusting the people and commitment to a more egalitarian society that would ensure equal access to resources, not only to land but also to education, food and health.

Where formal power is in the hands of a few and power is not shared but grossly misused, participation in the first instance results in building countervailing forms of power, leading ultimately to a healthier democracy.

Furthermore, if development results from participating and unleashing the positive energies of the people, particularly the poor and the vulnerable youth, then they must be the final arbiters of their lives. They also learn values of austerity, simplicity and to save even at low levels of income. They learn to keep the surplus from their work in their own hands. This form of development goes beyond merely meeting the material needs of the people and beyond considerations of redistributive justice alone. They address their health and education needs from their point of view. **Participation, empowerment and self-reliance are thus inter-related.**

The SAPNA identified options and advocated to South Asian Governments who established The Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation (ISACPA). It was an innovative partnership on macro policy and strategy between SAARC Governments and an Independent Group of South Asians from the academic community and organizations of the poor. They formed an inter-disciplinary team and carried out their in-depth inquiry over an eight-month period. Extensive consultations were also held with other experts, organizations of the poor and high-level policy-makers, including the SAARC Heads of State themselves.

The unanimity of emergence of this Report from the consultations in itself is an achievement for a diverse group of South Asians in relation to such a complex problem area is worthy of note as it reflected collective creativity. The collective analysis was not based on a priori theorising or on borrowed ideologies as in mainstream development thinking. It was based on an understanding of the South Asian economic, social, cultural and political reality, as well as, on the hard lessons on the ground of nearly half a century of development experience. This was the first time that South Asian Heads of State had themselves sought independent advice from a group of South Asians and provided them with an opportunity to collectively look critically at the post independence South Asian development experience and the polity and draw the lessons.

The Report was not merely on poverty in a narrow sense. It covered the Right to Work, Right to food, etc. It conveyed some sharp political messages, an overall development perspective with right for the poor youth and practical recommendations to the SAARC Heads of State on a coherent transitional development framework and agenda for the eradication of the worst forms of poverty and a positive response to search for work by poor youth, in a given time frame. This transitional strategy, to repeat, was based on the factor in surplus in South Asia *i.e. the creativity and efficiency of the poor who could be an asset* and not on capital, the scarce factor, as in conventional development theory. The poor and poor youth were not the problem, but were part of the solution. The process was based on social mobilisation and not on ad hoc projects. The Report outlined following three coherent messages and one composite strategic recommendation.<sup>10</sup>

### Message No.1

The structural adjustment policies, which accompany the open-economy industrialisation strategy currently being adopted by most SAARC countries, are likely to put further strains on the poor, particularly in the shorter term. **The conclusion was inescapable that the magnitude and complexity of the problem of poverty and youth employment in South Asian countries, not only puts democracy at risk, but also poses a threat to the very fabric of South Asian societies.**

### Message No.2

**The conventional development interventions with its faith in “trickle down” and administrative redistribution to the poor, over the past 50 years, are inadequate.** These interventions also assumed a conflict free social framework for change. Technocratic solutions, policies and projects and limited finance were designed to get to pre-determined objectives, which had little relation to the reality on the felt needs of the majority of the poor and youth. The role of the State had to change from that of a highly centralized doer to that of an enabler (decentralized) and supporter of numerous partners.

### Message No.3

**The eradication of poverty and generation of work in South Asia would require a major political rather than a technocratic approach in which social mobilisation and empowerment of the poor play a critical role.** In this pattern of people centered and directed growth, increased work, human development and greater equity, are not mutually exclusive trade-offs, but are complementary elements in the same process, particularly at the base of the economy.

### Recommendation

There should be a pro-poor growth and work oriented development approach (in the transition.) The new premise for action is an overall pattern of development, which in a transitional time frame moves on two fronts:

A cautious open-economy industrialization front with pro poor reforms; and

The pro poor poverty eradication and youth employment front with rigorous social mobilization and participation, which can generate more work for poor youth.

These two parallel strategic thrusts, having long and short-term time frames, can be harmonized as the two processes evolve.

## Towards Work with Dignity

SEHER's journey was undertaken by a team of young people in Balochistan, who had been employed in a conventional 'delivery of inputs to the poor' program, by a donor organization. These young people found that donor funding did neither reach the poor, nor had any sustainable impact. Once they learned the methodology of participatory development and social praxis to mobilize, conscientise and organize poor youth in this North Western, almost desert region of Pakistan, they organized themselves to facilitate and move other youth towards self-reliant development, work with dignity and the eradication of the worst forms of poverty. The point of departure was the spirit of self-reliance and dignity in the culture and the yearning of youth against dependency.

SEHER's mission is to work for poverty alleviation and for the aspirations of youth in different rural pockets of the province of Balochistan. It opts for "bare hand approach" using Rigorous Social Mobilization through Participatory Action Research (PAR) as the strategy to alleviate poverty. SEHER members are committed to social, political and economical change of the poor youth and believe that the empowerment of the poor is critical to unemployment, poverty alleviation and marginalization of poor youth.

SEHER jumped from the primary organizations to the federations and scaled up its operations, in keeping with the vastness of Balochistan and the poverty and unemployment of the area. Speed was of essence in the multiplication of the process, as Balochistan borders Afghanistan and the youth are exposed to the adverse fallout from the destabilization in that region.

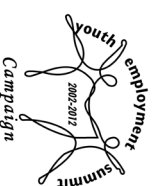
## Work through Self-Help and Cooperation

During the 1960s the South Korean economy grew at a rate of 10 per cent per annum, supported by massive inflows of foreign aid and private foreign investment. The growth was concentrated in the modern urban industrial and mining sectors. This pattern of development not only caused significant disparities in urban/rural incomes, but also led to a large migration of youth from rural to urban areas. The earlier distribution, with 70 per cent of the population in rural areas, had changed by the early 1970s to 50 per cent in urban areas and, if the trend continued, it was expected that urban population would increase to 70 per cent of the total by 1981. This movement of population has been very intense in the Gyeongsan-gun area, as it is mountainous with poor soil and has traditionally low agricultural productivity. There is a steady migration of the youth and able-bodied from here to the urban industrial areas around Pusan.

The social and political consequences of these income and population migration trends led the government in 1970 to initiate the Saemaul Undong or the New Community Movement, 'in which people work together in order to construct better and richer villages, and as a consequence, a richer and stronger nation'. The Saemaul Undong is a nationwide, integrated, rural development movement based on 'the spirit of diligence, self-help and cooperation'. The government gives support to the self-help and cooperative efforts when they are faced with difficult problems. The support is in the form of financial (mainly supply of materials or equipment), administrative and technical assistance.

An important element of the movement is the orientation and training of the elected local cadres aimed at raising the leaders' level of consciousness and ability to motivate people. The second level of training occurs at the provincial and county level, with emphasis on providing material benefits and on local problems of a more technical nature, such as farm management, cash-crop production, agricultural civil engineering and construction of farm machinery.

Official reports indicate that during the first five years itself of Saemaul Undong, villagers built miles of village and farm roads, a large number of small bridges, irrigation ponds, dykes, water channels, village halls, village warehouses, village factories and hydraulic water-supply systems. They carried out reforestation projects and installed village telephones. They accumulated capital through Postal Savings, in Agricultural Cooperative Savings, in Fisheries Cooperative Savings and in Village Credit Union funds. The government invested in these Saemaul projects and the value of completed projects is estimated at 2.5 times the government investment.



## Rural Culture and Work Ethics

The Thai Rural Reconstruction Movement (TRRM) intervened in the 1960s is a private foundation, which has initiated one of the most comprehensive rural development programmes for keeping rural youth in rural areas in Thailand. It is part of an international family of organizations, linked through the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), which had experimented and sustained a holistic approach to rural development in various countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. The root of the idea lies in the experience of the founder, Dr James Yen, in mass education projects in China prior to 1949.

The movement is based on the philosophical premise that 'the paramount need of the young peasant is not relief but release -release of their own potentials for individual growth, economic productivity, and social and political responsibility'. Implementation is on the basis of the culturally rooted philosophy of 'rural reconstruction: the goal of which has been defined as 'human reconstruction' of Thailand. Both have their basis in the culture and religious values. To meet the broad goals the movement, through experience, has evolved a four-fold programme: **Livelihood, Health and sanitation, Education and Self-governance.**

The spearhead of the TRRM's activity is the young rural worker. The major credit for the success of the programme is attributable to the creation of this one institution, and differences in the centres can be traced to the strengths and weaknesses of the rural workers, his commitment, method of operation and integration with the community.

The major visible impact of the TRRM's activities so far has been through the *livelihood* programmes, which has greatly quickened the pace of the adoption of new crop technology through its extension efforts. The productivity has increased and the process of modernization has accelerated. The poor have derived some benefits, particularly through animal production programmes. The organization has established close rapport with the village through its activities in education and health and has partly translated this confidence into self-managed forums, which are promoting unity and facing certain basic issues. In sum, the TRRM has made a substantial impact on the life of the villages it has covered. The experience gathered by the TRRM—its philosophy, approach, detailed methodology and activity sequencing—is of value in meeting the new challenge of employment and dignity for poor youth.

## Youth as Facilitators of Youth Employment

Village society in Sri Lanka is not a homogeneous or harmonious entity and basic contradictions are a fundamental fact of village life. On the one hand, there is a minority of dominant interests – the traders, moneylenders and the bigger landowners, the elite in general and even the village level bureaucrat - who benefit from the status quo, and on the other, the majority consisting of the poor and marginal farmers, landless workers, small fisher-folk, rural artisans and other deprived groups, the majority of whom are youth who are unemployed and live in poverty. The relations between the two groups are often asymmetrical in form and take on an unequal dominant–dependant character: with the rich able to control the very survival of the poor.

Moreover, the poor themselves are not a homogeneous category being divided on caste, religion and other issues and competing with each other for limited economic opportunities in the village. These factors - dependency attitudes and lack of security - inhibit them from taking initiatives to improve their lot, tend to make them non-innovative and non-experimental, and thus trap them in structural poverty. The Rama Case is a part of a pioneering process, which showed how the methodology of social mobilisation can be facilitated by a trained facilitator.

The trained external facilitators or action-researchers from an NGO, the Participatory Institute of Development Alternatives (PIDA) Messrs. S.P. Wickramanaratchi, Daniel Fernando, S.G. PUNCHIHEWA and K.K. Pathmananda started their social mobilization activities with the Poor and Youth as subjects and persisted despite difficulties helping to build up several self-sustainable organizations of the poor and multiplying and expanding the process into the hinterlands and making themselves progressively redundant after the initial process had matured.

## Fundamentals for Job-led Growth not Jobless Growth

The transitional transformative strategy in the Report of the Independent Poverty Commission has a direct bearing on generating work and dignity for poor and alienated youth in South Asia and giving them an option to resist violence and militancy in challenge of their state structure.

The premises underlying critical fundamentals for Growth with Work are interrelated and essential for moving forward:

- The long revolution and social transformation
- Perspectives and values
- Countervailing power: A political approach
- Growth, human development and equity: No trade offs
- Refocusing praxis and participation

### i) The Long Revolution and Social Transformation

The first premise that needs to be internalised is that eradicating poverty of such a magnitude in South Asia requires a major social transformation and structural changes, not marginal tinkering and ad hoc reformist damage limitation palliatives. It had to go beyond the past the simplistic growth and redistribution and human face models. Structural change was more than mere financial and budgetary discipline and ad hoc redistributive justice.

This social transformation has to be conceived as a long revolution implying a complex chain of long and short time frames – not a one shot ‘big bang’ revolution. The ten year plans that were formulated and carried out using factors in short supply, like capital and imported technology ignored the real factor endowments of South Asian societies, which lay in the basic values and creativity of its people, in its natural resource base and knowledge systems.

It is time to make the assertion that South Asia has not made a major social transformation in the past half century since independence through the kind of rational structural changes that was called for. Structural changes when attempted were equated to one dimensional land reform processes or merely to achieving budgetary and financial discipline or fragmented trained development or weak decentralisation reforms. Even here we embraced received wisdom from outside instead of moving in a series of transitions building on what we had.

A structural change that is transformative had to be rooted in the people and encompass the whole society, without exclusion. Creativity, innovativeness and a problem solving approach to life has always been a characteristic of South Asian societies. This creativity was also underpinned by a co-operative spirit, no predatory relations with nature and a simple way of life which included satisfaction of basic needs of all, as well as, a concept of inner spirituality, constructive work and leisure. Cultural, scientific pursuits and appropriate technology were integral to the way of life of the people. What were to be excluded were mindless consumerism, “dog eat dog” competitiveness and waste of our natural resource base and knowledge.

A second fundamental transformative issue that eluded us was the issue of self-reliance. South Asia had too long depended on external inspiration and hegemonies. Rural South Asia where 70% of the people lived was dominated too long by the city. The rural poor were subservient to the rural rich. South Asia could not develop unless this dominance dependence syndrome was creatively mediated. To break out of this, required a major social mobilisation effort and a wise use of all local resources – natural, financial, knowledge and most of all the creativity of all the people, not just a few. It was in this way that the necessary psychological and institutional staying power for sustainability of the transformative process could be built up. In retrospect is it not evident that we ended up with ‘soft’ societies, where the majority of people including the poor and young persons become alienated?

Thus the binding constraint for development became the inhibition of the fullest expression of the people’s creativity, their lack of identity with work in which there was fulfillment, and their inability to relate harmoniously with nature. De-alienation of people is an important dimension in the process of building self-reliance.

The right to participate by everyone not a few in decisions that affect their lives is another fundamental premise. This is what participatory democracy means. It goes with the co-operative spirit and a raising of consciousness in the social mobilization process. It is antithetical to the domination and dictatorship of elite. Participatory democracy can be more fully practiced with effective decentralization and devolution of power to the people.

Finally, the rhetoric of “One World” and international development co-operation with aid mesmerized us into thinking that there was a short cut. This also was a part of the South Asian elitist vision, which has created “soft” and unequal societies. Now, it is more of the same with rapacious pursuit of globalization, without learning the lessons of history and throwing caution to the winds.

The inescapable conclusion is that if a long revolution is a meaningful pathway to social transformation through series of transitions which is rooted in people, holistic and sustainable, then fragmented and eclectic conceptions of complex social processes are irrelevant both to understand and intervene in the crises that face most countries of South Asia today. The narrow ideological theorising of the past and attempts to force complex reality to fit simplistic mish mash of theory have in most countries prevented the flowering of concepts and ideas relevant to a more systematic transformative evolution of either participatory democracy or development rooted in the culture and the people.

## ii) Perspective and values

The structural changes at the macro and micro levels outlined above have to start with a clear perspective and be value-led. This is fundamental for correct action. Before action is taken, the underlying values need to be made explicit. It is then that praxis, the action-reflection-action process, becomes an instrument for initiating and reinforcing the positive macro or micro structural changes desired or underway. Sultan Bahu, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Sufi poet whose universal message of a human society was a positive influence on fundamental South Asian values, stated:

*“That which consciousness reaches far is always a step ahead of the actual. When one possibility is actualised, a new possibility is born”.*

The perspective from which the search for the underlying paradigm begins is that participatory democracy and development are two sides of the same holistic vision that has inspired human endeavour in different South Asian socio-cultural settings over the past 2,000 years and more of recorded history. The values that have emanated from this deeper interpretation of the vision, even though somewhat diffused in practice have been implicitly incorporated, in one way or another, in these two fundamental cornerstones. Several fundamental values which existed in traditional South Asian societies must be identified and re-examined in this connection. Some critical values relate to looking at life in its totality and all its richness; participation of the people in decisions that affected their lives; sharing and caring for the community, co-operative activities beyond individual self-interest; trust, innocence, simplicity, thrift; a work ethic with a fine-tuned balance between work and leisure; harmony with nature and a rational use of both natural and financial resources; communal ownership of the commons; and complementarity between men and women, as well as, gender equity. The Report of the Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty alleviation translated some of these values into rights and gave high priority to sharing and caring; the right to food, the right to work and right to information in the transition.

The literature is full of instances of people's participation and democratic practice at the base of the system alongside wise and compassionate leadership at the top. Democratic consensus-making was very much a part of the Asian tribal mode of governance. Peer pressure was a major deterrent to corrupt practices. This also extended to every day activities such as the taking of loans and credits, where peer pressure ensured repayment. There was an open information system at the level of the community, which further reinforced the principle of equity and checks and balances and accountability. Democracy in labour relations, exchange labour, common ownership of land and other productive assets further reinforced cooperative values, mutual aid and equity.

The knowledge system that evolved in these cultures and from these valuational frameworks, by intuition, as well as, by trial and error, propelled the process with its own rationality and mediated various tensions in the process. It bears repetition that this knowledge system was scientific in any terms.<sup>(11)</sup> The technology that resulted provided the material basis for sustainable, essential needs-oriented development and for predominantly self-reliant societies aware of their reality. The knowledge system also helped to resolve some of the sharper contradictions whenever they arose, providing a wide range of technological choices in keeping with the fundamental human values, and cultural norms.

Having said this, intellectuals and activists alike have a long way to go in clarifying some of the fundamental features of the culturally rooted historical paradigm, processes, instrumentalities and organizational forms. The task is made very complex because of both the historical contradictions that have existed in these societies and the distortions in the modes of production, community spirit and consensus-making that set in as colonialism, modernization, industrialization, Westernization and other dependency creating external interventions and penetrations occurred. A distinction has to be made between what are fundamental contradictions and those that are marginal and therefore simpler to resolve.

Understanding these peoples' responses is not an easy task. The objective of the exercise is not to go back to the past, viewed with romanticism, but to understand the contradictions, then to observe the seeds of change, learn the lessons that reflect some of the democratic and wider development values. The hard lessons from the ground can be learned through social praxis in moving towards a more humane and qualitatively better society for larger numbers, building on the sustainable processes already initiated in the new social movements. A new reading of indigenous value systems and traditions, both from written and unwritten sources, is also essential for a deeper understanding of the nature of democracy and the human development and accumulation process in the South Asian context. This is a challenge for research, research methodology and scientific validation of history.

### **iii) Countervailing power: a political approach to the transition**

Another fundamental in rethinking past paradigms of development and democracy relates to the question of participatory democracy. In this regard, devolution of power and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable groups, as opposed to representative democracy and highly centralized elite power requires clarification. There is little need to criticize the dangers of centralized power, representative state structures and absolute power that corrupts. What needs to be elaborated is the concept of participatory democracy and the building of countervailing power, initially within the political spaces that are already available.

Conventional thinking on both development and democracy was based on a harmony model. This needs to be demystified. The assumption of harmonious communities in a conflict-free social framework for change has no basis in reality, whether at local, national levels in South Asia or at global levels. This is another myth.

At the local level, for instance, rural communities in South Asia in today's historical conditions are not homogeneous entities. Sometimes, where land reform has occurred or in a tribal society in which land is communally owned and traditional social values continue to exist, the situation may be comparatively harmonious. But even there, the degree of harmony will have been reduced by colonial penetration and other forms of external intervention. These interventions themselves have generated further local, national and global contradictions. They have also contributed to the erosion of traditional communal bonds and values and disrupted the traditional system that assured a more equitable access to resources by the poor and vulnerable groups.

In the South Asian villages, deep-seated contradictions exist between different groups with conflicts of interests. There are sharp relationships of dominance and dependence. These relationships give power to the dominant (the landlord, the trader, the moneylender, the bureaucrat, et al), bringing about a crisis of immediate survival for the poor. Serious divisions exist among the poor themselves, based on caste, religion, gender, age, etc. These divisions, the people's passivity, the resultant reluctance to take economic, social and political initiatives collectively to improve their lives, and their inability to change their lives individually, further compound their difficulties. It also increases the possibilities of leakages in resources meant for the poor. These factors also prevent the poor from benefiting from technocratically evolved development

packages. The same conflict syndrome, between those who have power and those who do not, can be identified in the actual working of the national and global systems. Therefore, the rhetoric of harmony and interdependence at all levels cannot be a point of departure from which to rethink the question of transition to participatory democracy and devolved power. Sometimes, class differentiations are blurred by caste or tribal loyalties. This makes analysis in conventional social categories irrelevant.

Any meaningful approach to social change that will not benefit the rich at the expense of the poor, or the powerful at the expense of the powerless, must be both political and transformative. It should not be a purely technocratic, fragmented, and as purely sectoral. The project approach with “tool kits” is inadequate. A political process has to be initiated. The political space for a political approach exists already in some countries, while in others it needs to be created. A great deal of social mobilization is required. This involves re-moulding of elites as well as mobilizing, raising consciousness of the poor and helps them to build their own organizations. The poor need to investigate and understand their reality and reflect on how they can move out of poverty to dignity through their own efforts. This process may not happen spontaneously and may have to be facilitated by committed catalysis.

Participation is of central concern in any discussion of development in wider human terms. It is sheer pretension to think that the multifaceted crisis of South Asian countries can easily be overcome or that the reshaping and development of these societies in a more balanced and sustainable way can be undertaken without the participation of the poor as subjects in that process. The very nature of participatory, self-reliant development activities is such that they will eventually attract the attention of the power structure, still working within the confines of the failed centralized paradigm. Some of these new participatory activities will be co-opted by the system, others exterminated. While some are repressed, many still survive. Those which survive, existing in isolation, do not add up to much in terms of social transformation. But if they are properly linked and multiply themselves through the processes of mobilization, conscientization and organization, they can become a countervailing power in the social context and help to widen the political space for change even further. Countervailing power is necessary to retain the vitality of the poor. It is a living, collective consciousness of the poor and a vigilance of the poor against the abuse of formal power. It is the capability to resist such abuse and to assert the will and rights of the large numbers of poor whenever formal power deviates at the macro, as well as the micro, level. It is critical for ensuring accountability by those who wield power. They must be held accountable for its proper use to the poor, and not merely for its abuse. Thus, building of countervailing power at all levels becomes a fundamental component in a participatory democratic and sustainable development process and constitutes a critical point of departure for rethinking development and democracy.

Countervailing power does not pre-clude new partnerships with sensitive institutions, state or others in the support system like Government Entities, Banks, NGO's or Donors.

#### **iv) Growth, human development and equity: no trade-offs**

Most South Asian countries were predominantly rural, peasant societies, with traditional knowledge systems and non-predatory relations with nature. And yet, nearly four decades ago, when these countries began to emerge as politically independent nations from centuries of colonial rule, they adopted a development model that was indifferent if not inimical to the large numbers who live in rural areas. Support for this model, which essentially permitted the continuation of existing international economic relationships, came from two external sources: the industrialized countries of the west and the industrialized, centrally planned countries of the Eastern bloc.

The framework that has influenced this development process in the past half-century assumed that there were 'developed' countries and 'developing' countries and that if the experience of the former, along with some capital and technology was transferred to the latter the gap would be narrowed. The objectives and processes were viewed in economic terms and great reliance was placed on economic factors and centralized decision-making to achieve results. This framework assumed that rapid economic growth could take place if there was central planning and control of the economy (by the state or the private sector) as a 'top-down' process, with emphasis on industrialization, modernization and urbanization. Capital, the factor in short supply in the so-called developing countries, was seen as the main input into the process. Internal capital accumulation, it was assumed, would be assisted by free and massive inflows of foreign capital and technology. The cumulative benefits of growth in the modern sector – public or private – were expected eventually either to 'trickle down' automatically or at best to be handed down in an administrative fashion or 'delivered' to the poor. Material accumulation either in public or private forms were expected to solve other human problems.

As this multifaceted crisis deepened, the accumulation process set in motion either by means of private capitalism or of state capitalism which was a fundamental process to the old concept of economic development and its reformist option had turned out to be insufficient, and the pressures mounted for an alternative accumulation process. It was not a matter of growth first and equity afterwards. Redistributive justice and 'trickle-down' were simply not the issues.

The widening gap between the industrialized and South Asian countries, the results of the so-called green revolution which initially helped the rich farmer get richer and made the poor poorer within these countries, the massive transfer of resources from poor countries to rich, illustrated both the danger and the limited relevance of this framework to the majority of people in South Asia. They confirmed the limitations of the narrow, techno-economic model of development, even in its own terms.

The realities of the quantity and quality of foreign aid, of transfers of technology, and of the weak internal mobilization efforts ensured that the prevailing assumptions regarding the possibilities for rapid growth were of little operational value. Neither the quantity of aid nor its quality nor the kinds of technology transferred were sufficient or appropriate to transform these societies, let alone to lift them out of the poverty trap into modernization and industrialization. Even as there is general apathy towards aid and capital flows to South Asia in most industrialized countries today, there is also a growing body of

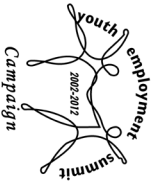
opinion which supports the view that the earlier methods of aid giving and technology transfer are things of the past. They have created impoverished rural areas and increased the dependence of South Asian countries within an inequitable global order.

Furthermore, the transnational corporations that control the stock of modern technology, and are still the main instruments for its transfer, extract high prices for their knowhow and equipment. The highly capital intensive and import-substituting technology that continues to be implanted into South Asia with little social control or social conscience bears insufficient relation either to real factor endowment, particularly of labour, or to the existing knowledge system, or to the wide range of technological choices available. The entire process has been wasteful and the contradictions too sharp and numerous for any orderly form of management of the process as a whole for the real benefit of poor countries.

But the reformist position continues to be based on conventional development thinking and practice. Even with greater social justice and safety nets built into it and with greater human capital formation, the development process is still considered mainly as an economic exercise, subject to allocation of scarce resources by governments and big private sector corporations. Furthermore, a conflict-free social framework for change is assumed. The vision of 'one world' continues to pervade the international rhetoric, along with the assumption that these changes - brought about under existing conditions and within unchanged structures - will result in an orderly and continuous transfer of resources from industrialized countries to South Asia. Underlying all this are further assumptions: that the problem of development is still mainly in the poor countries; and that a consistent set of policy packages based on technocratic considerations can be evolved and carried out from the top, both internationally and within individual countries. The basic assumption continues to be that the modernization/industrialization process, with some consultation with the people and the goodwill and assistance of 'developed' countries and the international community, will bring about positive social change. The poor are still considered to be objects and the targets of the process and at best to be provided with safety nets, while adjusting to an inequitable global system and a national system devoid of vision or capacity.

What, then, is the alternative development pathway for South Asia? As mentioned earlier, a sustainable development strategy for the present needs to search for alternative driving forces for a self-sustaining accumulation process. With the inadequacy of mainstream development action being established, the accumulation process on which it was based is also being questioned. The compulsion for seeking alternative driving forces for accumulation, even in its narrower conception is therefore mounting. This is not a matter of giving credit to the poor. It is a matter of embarking on a new pattern of growth with the poor where growth, human development and equity are not trade-offs, but part of the same complementary process.

It also seems necessary for South Asian countries to adopt a more complex development strategy that combines human development, growth, equity and technological change with a wiser and more creative use of local resources and knowledge. In such a strategy, the people's creativity, locally available resources and, local knowledge systems, savings become critical instruments. Imported capital and technology, the factors in short supply, can be supplementary.



The new strategy, moreover, does not have to be reflected in a single, replicable model; each country has its own socio-cultural specificity and will have to chart its own social transition. In this transition all countries, however, will need to pursue internally a basically two-pronged strategy that will permit them to maintain the gains from past attempts at modernization and industrialization—with appropriate damage limitation—and to make a direct attack on poverty in all its manifestations, an attack in which the poor themselves are the subjects and not the objects of the process. Initially, two prongs of the strategy may have different time horizons and some contradictions, but over time they can be harmonized. South Asian regional cooperation can reinforce national efforts. This kind of regional cooperation will also permit South Asian countries to adjust to the global system on more favorable terms.

Recent studies by South Asian scholars confirm that human development, growth and equity need not be trade-offs in the South Asian social-cultural setting. Studies by international commissions of enquiry such as the South Commission have endorsed the concepts of people-centred development, wise resource use and building technological capability in a step-by-step manner by widening the availability of technological choices. The 1990 United Nations Development Programme report on the concept of human development demonstrates that it is possible to achieve a high level of human development and quality of life even at initially low levels of income. Even the World Bank in its 1990 report on Poverty drew attention to the importance of participation by the poor in poverty alleviation and their contribution to development. It also drew attention to several successful micro-level people's movements and experiments in South Asia that, from small beginnings, have grown larger, increasing people's creativity, local resources and local knowledge. UN Conferences, the work of the Wasteland Development Board and others like them and the new ecological movements have increased awareness of the need for a wiser and more equitable use of natural resources. No longer can 20% of the world's people use 80% of the world's resources and also erode the resource base needed to sustain further generations.

### **To summarise:**

Since the beginning of the new millennium and the United Nation (UN)'s announcement of its goal to reduce poverty by 50% by the year 2015, some re-examination of past development thinking and action has taken place. However, much of this can be seen as "marginal tinkering" and reformist—and an inadequate response to the current crisis of development and poverty.

There is an urgent need to provide new directions. No longer can reliance be placed either on the strategies of the 1950s and 1960s and debt-led growth. Nor can the present crisis of development and poverty be resolved through Keynesian consensus and unsustainable welfare economics, or by simplistically resorting to monetarist and neoclassical economics, tempered by a "human face" and "human development."

Current studies confirm that poverty is increasing. Even the latest World Bank Annual Report 2003 has recognized that social unrest threatens poverty reduction goals. These warning signals and others are yet to be taken seriously.

What is the answer to this problem? Conventional development thinking prescribes a two-sector growth model—private and

public, and welfare for the poor. ISACPA recommended a three-sector growth model, with the third sector being that of the poor, who can as subjects in the process generate a further accumulation process where growth, human development, and equity are not trade-offs. The economics of this third sector, though simply stated, has a far from simplistic economic and political rationale. The eradication of poverty requires a major political rather than a technocratic approach where social mobilization and empowerment of the poor and their efficiency play a critical role. This simple truth is not based on a priori theorizing but on lessons from the ground.

## v) Refocusing praxis and participation

Another fundamental that requires further elaboration is the methodology of praxis. Some systematic efforts are now being made to break out of conventional social science methodologies into participatory action research by groups of South Asian scholars and activists working together. Beginning in the 1970s some new thinking was initiated.

Social praxis and participatory action research which goes with it, takes off from the cultural and historical experiences in South Asia. It criticizes a predetermined universalism and stresses pluralism, including geo-cultural specificity. As has been stated in the past, social sciences have evolved through the study of Western societies. Hypotheses and value judgments have emerged from that historical cultural world and continue to influence a major part of the academic community and through it the educational, technical and administrative systems. Some social scientists have begun to break out of the mould.

In the 1970s in their book *Towards a Theory of Rural Development*, Wahidul Haque, Niranjana Mehta, Anisur Rahman and Ponna Wignaraja elaborated a basic premise in this line of research. Development, they indicated, is simultaneously a 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' process.<sup>(12)</sup> There are the national macro perspectives and the constituent micro grassroots contradictions. Successful development is viewed as a process of human development, a process of social transformation in which the people are both the subject and the object. In such a process the people participate at all levels of decision-making in matters affecting the totality of their lives and through this process of empowerment a more democratic process is initiated.

Self-reliance is both a means and an end in this process. It is a process that releases the creative energy of people, assures equal access to resources for all, tends to eliminate the difference between mental and manual labour, and uses technology appropriate to these social goals. This research, though giving some space to micro-macro linkages, was primarily concerned with the grassroots micro problematic. It saw the issues of people's participation, conscientization, and the building of countervailing power as part of an ongoing social process; the long revolution towards social and structural change.

This analysis demonstrated the possibilities of incorporating social justice and participation into a process of accumulation and economic growth that would involve and benefit the poor and the vulnerable in the all-round development of their lives. The methodology was praxis. In particular, there was increasing evidence that such processes were sustainable at the

micro level. Two critical instrumentalities that are at the core of the methodology are now apparent. One is the knowledge system inherent in the culture, which must inform the whole process. The other is the role of the facilitators/animators without whom the process cannot multiply and go to scale during a given time frame. These facilitators/animators are different from the conventional Marxist vanguard.

Praxis and Participatory Action Research (PAR) were located outside this knowledge system. Therefore, it was necessary to demystify both the nature of this knowledge and the premises and method of this knowledge transfer, before proceeding to the concept of cognitive knowledge and to the many stocks of knowledge and technology that can be drawn on for praxis, PAR and sustainable development. The framework then can be elaborated in relation to the relationship between knowledge, action and power on which PAR is premised.

This then helps to bridge the gap between real knowledge and wisdom, and development action and social change. Praxis and PAR must be premised on the wider alternative knowledge system that is available, in which the knowledge system provides the power to bring about a change in the condition of the knower and generates the new social process. It also gives a wider range of technological choices.

The second issue relates to the role of the facilitator or animator. In order to initiate praxis and enable the people to bring out their creativity with a spirit of self-reliance and self-involvement, and also to assert their right to participate in development as subjects in the process, an appropriate stimulation is required. Sometimes an independence struggle or a violent protest movement against oppression, exploitation and repression can spontaneously conscientise and help organize a people, as happened in India in 1947 or Bangladesh in 1972. But the point here is how this creativity may be released and sustained under less dramatic conditions and prevailing socio-political circumstances. The creative spirit exists in all human beings and does not always manifest itself spontaneously. The challenge is to bring out this quality and the strength and the dignity of the people that goes with it.

A growing body of experience shows how a facilitator/animator can initiate and catalyze this process. It also deals with dialogue as a mode of promoting participation, the training of committed facilitators and animators through participatory methodology and identifies steps for initiating Participatory Action Research (PAR). Finally, the question of the progressive redundancy of the external facilitator/animator as the sustainable and self-reliant base and process gets underway must be further analyzed.

### **Innovative Approaches and Partnerships: Initiating the Process from the Ground**

How are these partnerships built for the innovative growth process and mobilizing resources for youth employment particularly work for poor youth? The creativity of youth and the process as mentioned earlier, a sustainable development strategy for the present, needs to search for alternative driving forces for a self-sustaining development process with work for all. With the inadequacy of mainstream development action being established, the compulsion for seeking alternative-

driving forces for development and youth employment, even in its narrower conception is therefore mounting. This is not a matter of giving credit to the poor youth or financing a few youth employment programmes and projects. It is a matter of embarking on a new pattern of growth and accumulation process with the poor as subjects, where this pro poor growth, greater savings by the poor, austerity, simple living, right to work and equity are not trade-offs, but part of the same complementary process. A major social movement involving youth is required. There are many small experiments and success cases that have gone to scale.

These reflect a more complex development strategy at the micro level that combines growth, right to work, equity and technological change with a wiser and more creative use of local resources and knowledge. Many of these micro level experiments have been expanded and multiplied into social movements. In this strategy, the people's creativity, locally available resources and, local knowledge systems, savings become critical instruments. Imported capital and technology, the factors in short supply can only be supplementary. A higher level of local saving and investment is required.

Various United Nations Development Programme Reports on the concept of Human Development demonstrates that it is possible to achieve a high level of human development and quality of life even at initially low levels of income. Even the World Bank in its Reports on Poverty drew attention to the importance of participation by the poor in poverty alleviation and their contribution to development. The Independent South Asian Commission on Poverty Alleviation also drew attention to several successful micro-level youth movements and experiments in South Asia that, from small beginnings, have grown larger, increasing creativity of poor youth, using local resources and local knowledge. The challenge is to further scale these up, link into social movements and translate these to effective national, regional and global policies.

For instance, as early as 1993, a first dialogue was organized on the basis of the Report of the Independent South Asian Commission (of 1992) with the World Bank, a International Financial Institution. The members of the SAARC Standing Committee officially approved the World Bank's invitation to discuss the Poverty Commission Report at a high level Workshop on Poverty Reduction in South Asia, with the participation of the Secretary-General SAARC and members of the Poverty Commission. Representatives of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, UNDP, IFAD and UNICEF participated in exploring ways of financing the recommendations through new partnerships. But in practice, their efforts fall short of a major effort at social mobilization. They confine themselves to a few more education, skills training or micro credit projects.

The process was repeated in a second dialogue with a bilateral donor, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, in 1995, which is now a leading advocate of the global Copenhagen Plus Five Declaration on Poverty Reduction by 50% by 2015.

Both dialogues sought first to identify several areas of consensus in the diverse experiences, approaches and perceptions

among the different groups of participants to the problem of poverty, youth employment and its solutions. There were a number of unique features to these dialogues. First, they helped the donor organizations to understand the innovative approach to pro poor growth, human development and right to work by poor youth and equity that was presented by the Independent South Asian Commission. Second, it helped to generate a dialogue between the various donor organizations that wished to harmonize their approaches and the advice they were to give South Asian governments. Third, the dialogue brought together diverse strands of thought within these organizations to focus on the deepening crisis in the South Asian region and question why aid was not reaching the poor. Finally the dialogue also helped to highlight the need for conceptual clarity and better co-ordination between these donor organizations and attempt greater coherence in their aid and non-aid policies towards South Asia.

In both dialogues there was consensus that the process of poverty eradication and creation of work and dignity for poor youth in South Asia through conventional development approaches of liberalisation and structural adjustment was painfully slow and inadequate. The time horizon for the open economy and simplistic “structural adjustment” policies to have a positive impact on the poor at best was much longer than originally estimated. On the contrary, it was more likely to have adverse effects on the poor in the short term. It was also agreed that participation by the poor as subjects in the process and rigorous social mobilisation are a key component of a comprehensive poverty eradication strategy, which can also provide the basis for the Right to Work..

But it was also evident from these dialogues that IFI’s and donors in general still have a great deal of difficulty in working with participatory processes for poverty eradication, considering poor youth as a part of the new accumulation process and creating new kinds of work for poor youth. Official development assistance has yet to work out its equation both with poverty alleviation and youth employment in general and with the kind of grassroots social action by the poor and poor youth, in particular, in order to overcome their double burden of poverty and unemployment. There are a variety of innovative experiences on the ground from which lessons could be drawn. While some marginal evidence exists to the contrary, donors are as yet poorly equipped to support these successful participatory processes enabling vulnerable youth groups and the poor to move into sustainable development. These are due to lack of conceptual clarity, technical difficulties, procedural difficulties and lack of political commitment. While some donors have overcome these difficulties at the margins of their operations, they have yet to bring the lessons from their successes to the centre stage.

Most donors have difficulties in following in detail the logic of concepts like ‘the poor’, ‘participation’, ‘poor youth and their creativity’, ‘youth and the new accumulation process’, ‘self-reliance’, and process approach which are integral parts of an alternative conceptual framework. They pay lip services to youth employment with ad hoc projects for skills training, micro credit, restructuring education systems. These words are often used rhetorically without the conceptual clarity or detailed working out of the implications of the concept in the implementation phase. Second, technical administrative and procedural difficulties arise in relation to the type of actions to be undertaken with donor support. These relate to the methodology, design and evaluation of programmes and projects, the need and quality of expertise, the timetable for action and speed of

implementation. Third, the process approach, which starts with the poor themselves, raises a great deal of difficulty of donors. Their natural partners are governments, and even where a donor may be sensitive the government or its bureaucracy may be the stumbling block in working with other intermediaries. The process approach and participation by the poor requires new kinds of intermediaries like NGOs and alternative banks, all working with a great deal of flexibility, new norms and political space. Fourth, narrow donor financial accountability often results in needless sophisticated controls, careful adherence to narrow budgetary procedures and required predictable results. In the participatory process approach one activity leads to another with continuous evaluation built into the process. Not every stage can be predicted in advance. Finally, effective poverty alleviation implies, at the least, a sharing of power with the poor and poor youth and the necessary political consequences. It also means allowing the poor and poor youth access to resources, which were hitherto being used by the rich. This is what is meant by empowerment. It is also a new kind of partnership through building countervailing power:

The innovative approaches for poverty alleviation and generating work – such as, savings, credit and asset creation by the poor which have evolved in many Regions and which have started with release of the creativity of youth and led to the poor youth strengthening their capacity not only for survival, but also for meeting their social needs, entering into income generating activities for further improving their economic and social condition and that of their families, and sustaining the process – have been supported sensitively by a few donors. In several South Asian cases, which are visible the role of financing in this new accumulation process can be identified.

The positive contribution by these donors, even though still at the periphery of their total operations, need to be further analyzed to see what lessons can be drawn from this experience both for expanding their own efforts and for informing other like-minded donors. Their role can be discussed in the first instance in relation to how these experiments and partnerships came into being, who initiated the social mobilisation process and how. The critical question is how did the donor support the process and at what point of time. The partnerships with sensitive donor involvement in supporting these innovative youth experiments and enabling them to grow in scale shows that, in these cases, they have performed a creative and flexible support role, and worked through new kinds of partnerships, irrespective of whether that local partner has been an NGO, a government agency, or a bank. The sensitive donors have given this support in some cases through gender and youth programmes, as **entry points**. Here in lies a major point of departure. The particular donors have not tried to be an implementing agency at the grassroots. They are also moving away from working through the formal government bureaucracy with their very rigid rules. More and deeper lessons have to be drawn from “*success cases*” which have gone to scale on the ground. The *success cases* have to be linked and transformed into a social movement and macro policy.

## [Annex-1]

### YOUTH AND EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS IN THE ASIAN REGION

#### Introduction:

An alarming fact is that the young people are more than twice as likely as adults to be unemployed. Stark examples include South Africa, where unemployment among young people reaches 56 percent while adult unemployment is 23 percent, and Indonesia, where the comparable figures are 19 percent and 6 percent. Many young people who work in the informal sector of the economy are either employed part time or are not included in overall measures of the size of the labor force. Measuring labor force participation is extremely difficult, especially in developing countries. Despite these limitations, available statistics show that, because of substantial growth in their numbers worldwide, more young people than ever before in history are about to enter the labor market. In the developing world there will be 700 million new entrants to the labor force between 2002 and 2010. According to the International Labor Organization, more than a billion jobs must be created to accommodate these new workers and reduce unemployment.

Estimated distribution of youth population according to ILO for the year 2000

Name of the country	Total Population (millions)	Youth Population (15 – 24 years in million)	Percent Total (%)
Japan	126.4	16.2	13.5
China	1,276.3	191.4	15.5
Afghanistan	25.6	4.4	17.3
Bangladesh	128.3	30.2	23.5
India	1,006.8	191.3	19.0
Nepal	24.3	18.7	19.6
Pakistan	156.0	29.5	18.9
Sri Lanka	18.8	3.7	19.9
Cambodia	11.2	1.8	16.8
Indonesia	212.6	42.1	19.8
Lao PDR	5.7	1.0	18.4
Malaysia	22.3	4.2	18.8
Philippines	75.0	14.9	19.8
Singapore	3.6	0.4	12.3
Thailand	60.5	11.4	18.9
Viet Nam	80.5	16.3	20.2
Fiji	0.8	0.2	21.3
Iran	76.4	15.5	20.3

There is no data available on labor statistics with particular reference to youth unemployment. We are presenting the data that is available in UN Youth division.

#### **Afghanistan:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: M:71%; F:19% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:89%; F:22% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 29% (M:23%; F:6%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

#### **Maldives:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: n/a  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

#### **Bangladesh:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 66.8% (1991)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 72.0% (1991)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 25.8% (M:15.0; F:10.8%) (1991)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

#### **Nepal:**

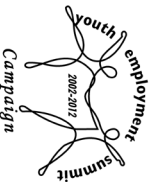
Economic activity (15-19) in %: 60.7% (1981)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:95%; F:66% (1981)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 33% (M:19%; F:14%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 5.5% (1980)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: Over 35%; 15-24 (1980)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: Over 35%; 15-24 (1980)

#### **Pakistan:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 33.4% (1994)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 47.8% (1994)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: M:-1.2%; F:-0.4% (1994)  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: M:1.2%; F:0.5% (1994)  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 24.1% (M:20.2%; F:3.9%) (1994)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 4.8% (1994)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: M:16.9%; F:4.9% (1994)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: M:13.6%; F:3.6%

#### **Bhutan:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: M:86%; F:72% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:96%; F:66% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 32% (M:19%; F:13%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a



### **Cambodia:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 8.2% (M:3.2%; F:4.0%);  
 15-17 (1993)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

### **Philippines:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 37.7% (1995)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 68.3% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: M:1.5%; F:1.8% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: M:0.3%; F:0.9% (1995)  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 24.0% (M:15.3%; F:8.7%) (1995)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 8.4% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: M:10.7%; F:7.5% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: M:15.7%; F:12.5% (1995)

### **China:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 76.2% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 94.0% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 23% (M:13%; F:10%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 2.8% (1994)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

### **Singapore:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 19.9% (1995)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 76.7% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: M:-3.1%; F:-3.9% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: M:-2.8%; F:-1.8% (1995)  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 16.3% (M:8.2%; F:8.1%) (1995)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 2.7% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: M:2.1%; F:4.2% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: M:12.0%; F:12.0% (1995)

### **Fiji:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 39.8% (1986)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 59.9% (1986)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 28% (M:23%; F:5%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 5.4% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

### **Sri Lanka:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 23.5% (1995)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 64.5% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: M:-4.7%; F:-4.8% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: M:-7.5%; F:-5.4% (1995)  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 20.6% (M:12.2%; F:8.4%) (1995)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 12.5% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: M:14.7%; F:10.4% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: M:8.7%; F:17.6% (1995)

### India:

Economic activity (15-19) in %: M:47%; F:27% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:84%; F:40% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 25% (M:17%; F:8%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 13.2% (1994)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: 59.5%; (1985)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: 59.5%; (1985)

### Thailand:

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 49.4% (1994)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 78.4% (1994)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 25.2% (M:13.6%; F:11.6%) (1994)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 1.5% (1993)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

### Iran:

Economic activity (15-19) in %: M:55%; F:17% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:87%; F:18% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 31% (M:25%; F:6%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 13.9% (1984)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: Over 25%; (1984)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: Over 25%; (1984)

### Vietnam:

Economic activity (15-19) in %: M:65%; F:55% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:87%; F:66% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 29% (M:16%; F:13%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-14) in %: n/a

### Japan:

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 17.0% (1995)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 74.1% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: M:-0.4%; F:-1.0% (1995)  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: M:-0.9%; F:-0.1% (1995)  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 13.3% (M:6.9%; F:6.4%) (1995)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 3.2% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: M:3.3%; F:2.4% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: M:10.0%; F:10.0% (1995)

### Indonesia:

Economic activity (15-19) in %: 39.2% (1994)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: 60.3% (1994)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 22.4% (M:12.8%; F:9.6%) (1994)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: M:13.1%; F:10.8% (1992)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: M:26.1%; F:19.1% (1992)

### **Lao PDR:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: M:65%; F:60% (1985)  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: M:87%; F:72% (1985)  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 30% (M:16%; F:14%) (1985)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: Over 35%; 15-24 (1985)  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: Over 35%; 15-24 (1985)

### **Brunei Darussalam:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: Over 30% (estimated) (1990)  
 Total Unemployment in %: n/a Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

### **Malaysia:**

Economic activity (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Economic activity (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Annual growth rate (20-24) in %: n/a  
 Youth and Labor Force in %: 24.4% (M:14.7%; F:9.7%) (1991)  
 Total Unemployment in %: 2.8% (1995)  
 Youth Unemployment (15-19) in %: n/a  
 Youth Unemployment (20-24) in %: n/a

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- 2 Wignaraja, P. “The Conflict Between Economic Rationality and Cultural Values”, p.53, Civilisations, Vol.3, No.1, Brussels, 1953.
- 3 Wignaraja, P. “Towards a new Praxis for Sustainable Development in South Asia” in Ponna Wignaraja and Akmal Hussain (ed.), *The Challenge in South Asia: Development, Democracy and Regional Co-operation*, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1989.
- 4 Ponniah, Gowrie “Ideology and the Status of Women in Hindu Society” in Ponna Wignaraja and Akmal Hussain (ed), *The Challenge in South Asia: Development, Democracy and Regional Co-operation*, Sage Publications, New Delhi/Newbury Park/London, 1989.
- 5 Wignaraja (1989), op. cit., and Sheth, D.L. “Catalysing Alternative Development: Values, the Knowledge System, Power”, p.61.
- 6 Ibid.
- 7 Vandana Shiva, “Women in the Forest”, p.55, *Staying Alive*, Zed Books, New Delhi, 1989.
- 8 Iyengar: B.K.S. *Light on Yoga*. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1966.
- 9 See *New Social Movements in the South: Empowering the People* – by Ponna Wignaraja (ed), ZED Books, UK & SAGE Publications, India 1993
- 10 The three messages are elaborated in great detail in chapters 1, 2 and 3 of the Poverty Commission Report and the recommendation in Chapter 4.
- 11 See P. Wignaraja, “The Knowledge System”; and D.L. Sheth, “Catalyzing Alternative Development: Values, The Knowledge System, Power”, in *The Challenge in South Asia*, 1989.
- 12 See *Development Dialogue, 1977:2*, and the follow-up study published in *Development Dialogue, 1979:2*, under the title *Bhoomi Sena - A Struggle For People's Power*. These were later published in de Silva et al., *Towards a Theory of Rural Development*, Progressive Publishers, Pakistan 1988